

# *the BUNEFOLDER*

*an e-journal for the book binder and book artist*



*Volume 4, Number 2, Spring 2008*

*Examples of twined bindings  
by Roberta Lavadour*

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## Women and Books: Contemporary book artists share their thoughts

By Muriel Prince

While researching artists' books; reflecting on my practice; and analysing the reasons why I choose to make books, I discovered that many book artists are women. (Men also make books but they appear to be vastly outnumbered by women.) I began to question why so many women make books, and what drives them to work so prolifically in this relatively new genre because artists' books are frequently misunderstood, difficult to exhibit, and laborious to produce. I didn't want to research this question solely through the answers found in theoretical studies by academics and critics, but rather to hear directly from women themselves who are active in the genre. I did this by emailing women book artists whose work I had seen at exhibitions, and those whose work I had seen on the Internet, in books on the subject and/or in exhibition catalogues.

I asked the simple question: "Why do you choose to make books?"

### Correspondents

I contacted a diverse range of women book artists and received replies from twenty. Some make unique books; others make both one-offs and limited editions; and some produce only limited editions. Many publish their editions under their own small press label. A few also work with installation and/or film.

Their replies were eloquent, honest and enlightening. Backgrounds are diverse, ranging from bookbinding to painting, calligraphy to ceramics, and a multitude of others in between, but they all have one thing in common and that is a love for books. Some are driven, instinctively, to make books. Mia Leijonstedt, an award-winning artist bookbinder, makes beautiful, unique books crafted to an exceptional standard. Her background was in painting but she hasn't painted since 1996. She says: "I've often wanted to return to pure painting, and have even half-heartedly done so, but the book form just doesn't leave me alone ... It's not always easy giving birth to a new art work in book form but to see the final piece in the end is always a revelation and a surprise ... So much so that it spurs me on to make yet another. And so I carry on."

### Concept Driven

Artists' books are concept-driven. Book artists use, and combine, whatever means are necessary to give form to their idea, crossing all literary and artistic boundaries, refusing to compromise and settle for anything less than what is exactly right, and necessary, to give physicality to the concept.

Heather Hunter sums up the notion of this idea of 'whole': "Successful artists' books utilise the whole design and production process to reinforce the message of the subject matter. Shapes, folds, text patterns and materials can be used to nudge the viewer in the direction of the artist's message, producing a unified coherent statement from the outset."

Kazuko Watanabe's *The Diary of a Sparrow* is a very successful example of book as art that embraces idea, form and structure as a whole. This piece is the result of the translation of her grandfather's journals from an archaic literary style of Japanese into modern Japanese and English. While translating the texts, Kazuko discovered the history of a simple people living within a small stretch of land, their gentle lives tossed by the upheavals of war and the encroachment of the modern world. She explains: "Wishing to convey the rich and thoughtful journey of *The Diary of a Sparrow* to a wider audience, I designed and made this book of text and images. The binding design enables the book to unfold and stand on a table like a small Japanese house."



Kazuko Watanabe, *The Diary of a Sparrow*, 1999.

### Multi-disciplinary

Perhaps it's the freedom of the multi-disciplinary approach that appeals to women, the not being pigeon-holed and restrained by tradition or convention, the idea that anything goes - the concept can be realised using any and every means at the individual's disposal.

Joanne B Kaar says: "Colour, texture, pattern and mark-making using handstitch are all important elements in my work. Pages are made from a variety of papers, both hand and machine made, incorporating decorative techniques I've learnt while in Taiwan, including seal stone carving and book box making, combined with western techniques such as embossing, watercuts, watermarks, silkpaper making, and paste paper. Digital photography is also important as I document my paper objects on site as if they were archaeological finds."



Joanne B Kaar, *Kelp Paper*, 2006.

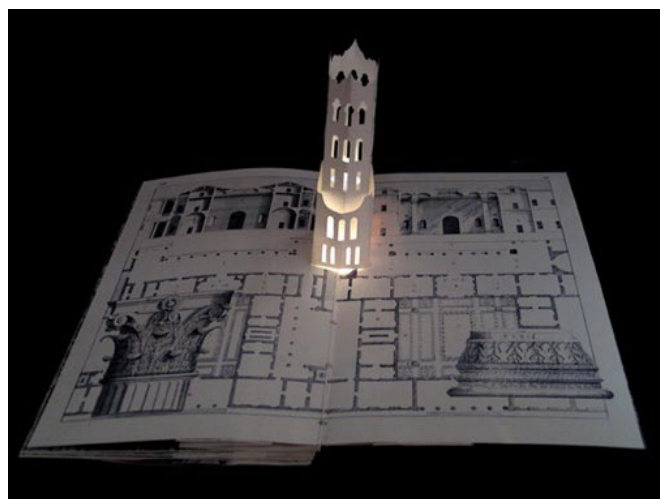


## Structure

Structure is important to Carol Barton: “The transformation from flat page to the dimensional form of a full-blown pop-up is the point of surprise that drives my work. I’ve always enjoyed exploring the structural aspects of materials – metals, wood, concrete, and in this case, *Five Luminous Towers*, paper. The design of pop-ups, or ‘paper engineering’ involves a bit of architecture, a basic understanding of mechanics, and a lot of trial-and-error problem solving”

*Five Luminous Towers: A Book to be Read in the Dark* was inspired by a residency in Italy and renewed an idea that she’d had which was to combine a light source with paper engineering.

## Voice



Carol Barton, *Five Luminous Towers: A Book to be Read in the Dark*, 2001

Material and structure aside, perhaps it’s the freedom to give voice to an idea – however disturbing and/or difficult - that appeals to book artists. Women, in general, do not shy away from difficult subjects, and women book artists in particular, seem to embrace the controversial, disturbing, horrific and ugly.

Autobiographical writing is the subject of many book artists. Krystyna Wasserman refers, in *The Book As Art*, to Tony Godfrey’s book *Conceptual Art*: “Tony Godfrey ... points out the shift from the generic to the autobiographical in the work of conceptual and book artists ... and notes that women artists are often concerned with issues of identity and gender that find expression in confessional and autobiographical narrative.” (Wasserman, K., 2007, *The Book as Art: Artists’ books from the National Museum of the Arts* [exhibition catalog]. New York. Princeton Architectural Press.)

Susan King chose to make a book about her journey through breast cancer, called *Treading the Maze*. It weds two journeys: a sabbatical through Europe and Ireland and diagnosis of breast cancer a few months after her return. “Spending time in the land of illness was like travelling through a foreign country.” Her aim was for the reader to explore a maze – once inside, they would suffer the disorientation of being lost in a maze, because the book embodies Susan’s experience struggling through the labyrinth of illness.



Susan King, *Treading the Maze, an Artist's Book of Daze*, 1993.

Like many women, I keep a journal and have done so for many years, sharing good times and bad with my notebook. I turned to the artist’s book to express my feelings about my experience of breast cancer and made *From Acapulco to Ovarian Ablation*. I used my journal entries as the inspiration for this book and wrote a series of short poems and prose pieces. I needed to find beauty in such a frightening experience and I did that through my choice of colour, images and materials.



Muriel Prince, *From Acapulco to Ovarian Ablation*, 2005.

This need to find beauty in negativity appeals to Sarah Bodman: “The excitement for me is the fact that you can make something very attractive to pick up, no matter what the message inside might be.”



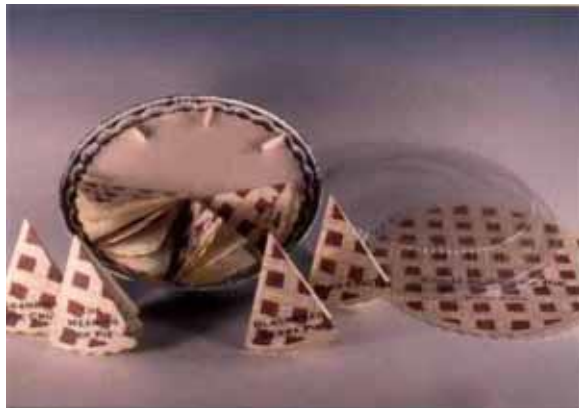
Sarah Bodman, *Flowers in Hotel Rooms, Volume 1*.

Heather Weston uses the book form to explore schizophrenia in *Binding Analysis: Double Bind*: “It employs the book’s structure (two spiral binds, right and left, with the page splitting in the centre) to say something about the experience of schizophrenia that a textual narrative alone could not say. The book is also about finding an understanding and solving the riddle contained in the structure, and relies on the reader’s active participation. Four separate narratives unravel concurrently (one pictorial, two textual and one structural). The book plays with notions of ‘object relations’ and the structural and relational disturbances that are central to any experience of mental illness.”



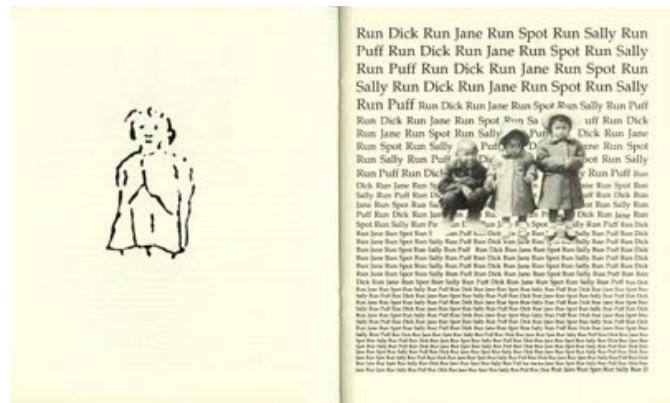
Heather Weston, *Binding Analysis: Double Bind*

The idea of the unexpected, something not being what it seems, features in Emily Martin’s *Eight Slices of Pie*. She made this book as a reaction to the atrocities of 9/11. At that time she found herself drawing in, looking for reassurance, and as she sat in a café, she focused on the comforting notion of pie. Each slice contains a recipe, personal memories and reflections.



Emily Martin, *Eight Slices of Pie*, 2002

Clarissa Sligh revisited her childhood, giving form to a painful memory. “The *Dick and Jane* readers from which I was taught in elementary school convinced me that Dick and Jane’s white, upper-middle-class suburban family was the norm, and that my life was an aberration. I created *Reading Dick and Jane with Me* as a site of resistance from which to challenge the message of the old textbooks. In my book, children from my old neighbourhood stand in for the characters, and they answer back to authority.”



Clarissa Sligh *Reading Dick and Jane with Me* 1989.

Tatana Kellner describes *B-11226: Fifty Years of Silence*: “These two volumes preserve my parents’ memories of internment in several concentration and extermination camps during World War II. Handwritten Czech text, transcribed into English is printed over contemporary and historical photographic images from the concentration camps. The hand written manuscript is printed on translucent pages. Family photographs provide a poignant contrast to these horrific accounts. Die cut pages fall around a flesh coloured, handmade paper cast of each parent’s forearm, tattooed with its ineradicable number.”



Tatana Kellner, *B-11226: Fifty Years of Silence*, 1992.

## Fun

Or maybe it’s the freedom to have fun. In complete contrast to the previous book, Tatana told me that, in collaboration with her partner Ann Kalmbach, they like to “explore the idea of humour and absurdity in a book format”. *Your Co-Worker could be a Space Alien* is a wonderful example.



Tatana Kellner/Ann Kalmbach, *Your Co-Worker Could Be a Space Alien*, 1985.



## Spirit of Nature

The spiritual connection to nature is a strong influence on many artists, and book artists are no exception.

Lotte Glob makes beautiful unique books. Using local materials found in the Highlands of Scotland, she captures the spirit of nature in her wonderful sculptural works. She says: "The spirit of the highland landscape is gathered on long walks, brought back to be fused in the kiln under high heat and transformed into sculptured books, which challenge our perception of the book." She describes the intangible and ephemeral in her work in a very poetic way:

"Hidden – within the vitrified pages – rocks, sediment, pebbles, glass and bones – smells from moors and heath – fading light at dusk. Dawn – sun rising behind mountain peaks ... Naked hills with scattered rocks and boulders – clouds racing across mountaintops – space for idle thoughts – a feast of solitude."



Lotte Glob, *Untitled*.

The works of Geraldine Pomeroy capture the essence of Australia's natural world. She says: "For me, the journey begins with observation, inspired by the formation of petals on a flower, the patterns and textures of bark, contrasting colours of the outback and sky, the twisting shapes of vines, the cleavage of a valley, the earthy palette or the motion of the waves. Nature and earth's elements are my muses. I use reclaimed, recycled and hand gathered natural materials to create handmade papers and artists books ... Each sheet is an evocative piece of the land that it comes from, as rugged and inspiring as Australia's ancient landscape."



Geraldine Pomeroy, *selection of works*.

## Historical and Cultural

History plays an important role in book making, whether in historical forms and techniques, or the spiritual essence that Mia Leijonstedt captures when she says: "To me there is something sacred about books – not just for what contents they hold, but because of the way they have come about and survived throughout centuries. When I make books, the whole history of them is present, specifically the history of those who used to make books. I can almost feel the monastic bindery around me. I'm in awe of the intricate technical details that binders before me have had to come up with in order for our books to be what they are today, structurally. I feel extremely lucky to have those roots back to the binders that came before me, my historical family of bookbinders that I feel that I professionally descend from. And when I make a structural discovery myself, something that makes a binding work better, I feel I'm contributing to the evolution of the book form."



Mia Leijonstedt, *Codex Spiritus*.

Heather Hunter uses the ancient Chinese whirlwind book structure to great effect in her book *Washed Up*. She says: "There is a poem inside that I wrote soon after I retired and was feeling a bit down. As with all books it is an amalgamation of events that kick things into action. We visited Troon one New Year and on New Year's Day I went beachcombing and found several items that I brought home. A piece of plastic with words distorted was my favourite. I was making paper from scraps ... using discarded items which tell their stories, as do humans after being discarded from work."



Heather Hunter, *Washed Up*, 2005.

## Tactility

Books have a sensual dimension. Tactility is an important element. Karen Hanmer says: "Books are tactile for the artist. Books are tactile for the viewer. I believe feeling physically is a key to feeling emotionally."



Karen Hanmer, *Secrets of Flight*, 2004.

And Joanne Kaar: "Paper is my first interest. I love the feel of it. So I guess a book is exactly that, a touchy feely thing in your hands rather than behind a glass frame."

## Words

The word is an important element for many book artists, in particular the writer/artist. Betsy Davids discusses this point in her article *A Place for the Artist/Writer*: "One of the potentials I have most cherished in the artist's book is that it makes a place for the artist/writer ... in the divided psyche of our culture, the visual and the verbal are too often split from each other. For centuries, the artist who was also a writer and bookmaker, like William Blake ... were the freakish anomalies. In our time, within the newer understandings and permissions of the artist's book ... artist/writers have developed individual ways of integrating their writing and artmaking." (Davids, B. "Revealing the Mysteries")

As a writer/artist, this is one of the most important aspects of book art for me. The artist's book is a safe place where text and image can be brought together in as traditional or unconventional a form as is desired by the book maker. This allows me to experiment with and adjust the balance between text and image on my own terms. Working with both aspects is occasionally a conflict, usually a pleasure.



Johanna Drucker, *Narratology*, 1994.

Johanna Drucker uses text to great effect within her pages. Her texts - form and content - disrupt, challenge and unsettle the reader. In *Narratology*, "The book's structure is meant to show the variability of readings cast onto our stories and self-images when they are framed with different headlines and texts."



Karen Kunc works in collaboration with poets to produce beautiful, evocative books. She says: "I have worked with poets whose ideas fit with my own overarching themes that look to nature for reflection and for metaphors about our lives. They wrote poems expressly for my projects which produced great synergistic collaboration, especially *On This Land* with Lenora Castillo - handprinted woodcuts and a letterpress printed poem make a tactile and colourful interpretation of earth and human presence."



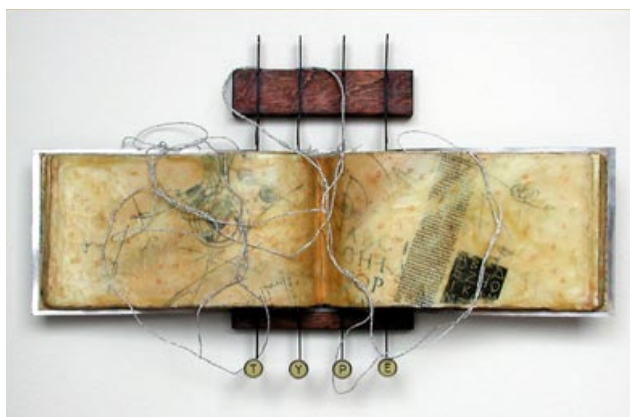
Karen Kunc, *On this Land*, 1996.

Heather Weston describes her relationship with words: "Words are very important to me. I am a slow, plodding reader (because of that, I don't read fiction very much), am slightly dyslexic, and also find verbal expression a bit of a challenge (speaking, as opposed to writing). To have access to a genre that enables me to redefine my relationship to books (and perhaps even to people), different to the rather painful one I had as a child, allows me to feel I have won a small battle - I've got words and books on my terms!"

## Symbology

Some artists work with an invented visual language, using symbols in preference to conventional alphabets, yet their books still retain a compelling narrative, such as in the work of Kathy Miller and Mia Leijonstedt.

Kathy says: "Discrete items of interest, bric-a-brac and vintage objects and collectibles are repurposed and juxtaposed with a language of symbols and codes forming three-dimensional layers of surface and texture. It is this visual vocabulary that stirs the imagination, and perhaps reveals new contexts that stimulate emotion, memory and transformation."



Kathy Miller, *TYPE*.

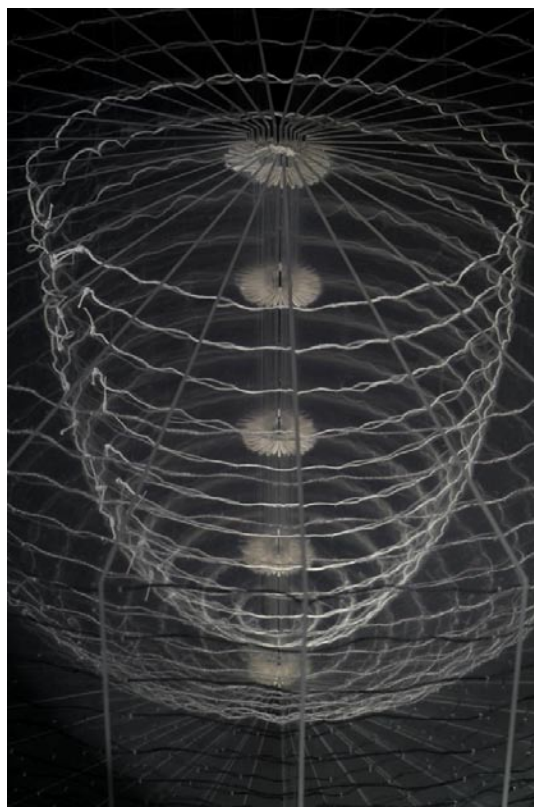
Mia says: "When the book form meets artistic expression the results are visual stories that don't necessarily need words. They can be read from the interplay of materials, textures and colours." *Book Of The Dead* draws inspiration from the Mexican Day of the Dead. It features two 'pages' separated by a leather leaf. The symbology and visual narrative of this book tell a powerful story.



Mia Leijonstedt, *Book of the Dead*.

## Book as Image

Some book artists work without any text or image. The structure itself becomes the book, as in the fascinating sculptural books of Adele Outteridge where the binding and transparent pages create beautiful forms. She says: "The beauty of making books with transparent media such as perspex, acetate or tracing paper is that all the pages are visible and the whole book can be read at once, even when it is closed ... Many of my books have no text or imagery at all. Thus there may be little or no distinction between what is the container and what are the contents. The book itself imparts the information."



Adele Outteridge, *Vessels*, 2004.



## Intimacy

Intimacy and, of course, the viewer, were most frequently mentioned in the responses. The public versus private paradox is a concern for many women artists and writers, whose practice focuses on personal themes. This, for me, has always been a problem. I want to work with, and express, psychological concerns but have been reluctant to 'hang my emotions on a gallery wall'.

Heather Hunter feels the same: "The intimate nature of books suits my nature. I am not good at shouting the message from a wall".

Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord describes how her need for intimacy at a difficult time in her life brought her to the book: "I turned to the book form at a time when my life, creatively and emotionally, was in flux. After six years of constant work, even obsession, with calligraphy, I was losing interest ... I was looking for something more. I wanted to do work that was original rather than interpretative. I was fascinated by the calligraphic gesture and explored abstract painting and surface design. Neither seemed to be the answer, I wasn't ready to leave the word behind.

On the emotional front, it was a difficult time. I was pregnant with my first child ... then, during my pregnancy, my mother died. After my son was born, I began a series called *Childbirth Journey* to come to terms with the pregnancy, the loss of my mother, the disappointment of a Caesarean, and the wonder of new life. There were fifteen pastel gesture drawings with an accompanying text ... I exhibited the series and had mixed feelings about whether they belonged on the wall. After the exhibit, I couldn't picture them hanging on the wall of my or anyone else's home. The content was too specific and personal to be viewed on a daily basis. It was seeking a form for the content that led me to the book. I liked the idea that it could be viewed on a more intimate scale and at one's own choice."

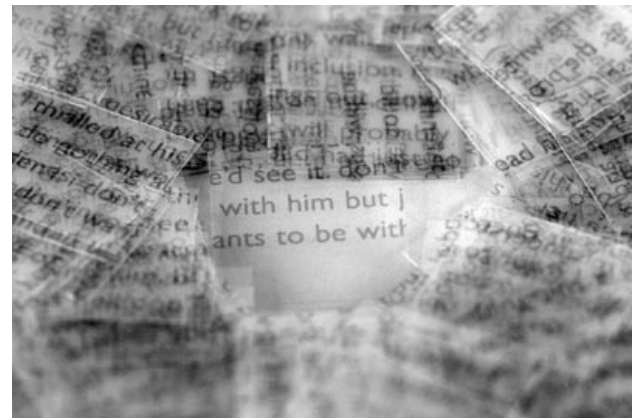
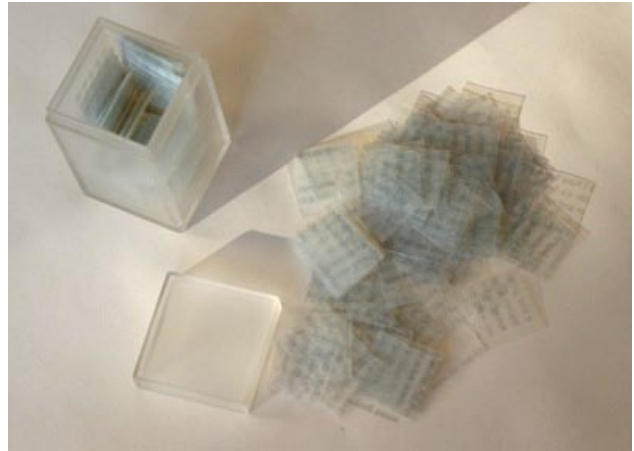


*Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord, Ixchel's Dream, 2002.*

Carol Barton says: "It [the book] is a very intimate art form in which the viewer becomes actively involved. This opportunity for personal communication with others is the most enjoyable element for me in making books."

Karen Hanmer reiterates: "Books really draw the viewer in".

This intimate connection with the reader/viewer is important to Emily Artinian: "I make books because I want the reader/audience to connect with the work physically, as well as emotionally and intellectually."



*Emily Artinian, Exposure, 2000.*

Johanna Drucker sums up in her essay *Intimate Authority*: "The space of a book is intimate and public at the same time; it mediates between private reflection and broad communication in a way that matches many women's lived experience ... The women who make books out of the materials of their lives and imaginations establish a balance that gives voice to their own issues on their own terms."

## Conclusion

From the voices of the women themselves, it is evident that there is no clear cut commonality running through these responses, and within such a diverse range of artists, this is not surprising. Therefore, there is no single easily identifiable reason why women choose to make books. Rather, the reasons why women make books are as complex, varied and multitudinous as the books and the women themselves.

One, perhaps pertinent fact, is that in the 1970s when the artist's book emerged, many feminist artists were turning away from painting and other art practices, feeling their gender to be undermined and devalued by the domination and influence of male practitioners and critics. As the artist's book had not, historically, been coded as male, women could embrace it as an art practice, on equal terms with men.

Another point may be that traditionally women have been the recorders of family history via the family album for many generations, added to that is the fact that many women, more so than men, have kept journals and diaries, often secret and frequently containing personal information about themselves and other family members.

Stephanie Brown points out: "Historically excluded from mainstream publishing, obliged to adopt male pseudonyms to get into print, women have a well-established affinity with alternative, secretive and hand made books. From the keepers of illuminated diaries, to the compilers and caption writers of family snapshot albums, ordinary women have long been combining text and visuals in completely individualised books." (Campbell, M., curator. *My Grandmother, My Mother, Myself* [exhibition catalogue]. n.l., n.p. 1994)

I have found that beneath the beautiful, the strange and the fragile, lies the need to make and the need to communicate, whether it's to tell a personal story, give visual reality to a long-forgotten text or to harness a fleeting idea, word, thought, feeling or memory, the works in this study all tell a story, perhaps not always directly, of the maker and, in turn, their reader/viewer.

Heather Weston perfectly encapsulates the essence of making books when she says: "Book art provides me with a highly controllable medium which satisfies quite a few desires in one place; wanting to decide exactly how the story is told, and perhaps even how it's received, as much as is possible; the desire to make is also very strong – to have a hand in its physical and conceptual gestation, without compromise; to know that the communication I am delivering is going to be received in quite a small, private space, but that I can get this quiet, intimate message out to lots of people. For me, all of these things exert a drive in me, but a drive that isn't necessarily always clear or evident to me ... a kind of unconscious pressure."

## Correspondents

Emily Artinian (UK), <<http://www.emilyartinian.com>>

Carol Barton (USA), <<http://www.popularkinetics.com>>

Sarah Bodman (UK), <<http://www.zyarts.com/zybooks/sarah.html>>

Johanna Drucker (USA), <<http://people.virginia.edu/~jrd8e/bio.htm>>

Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord (USA), <<http://www.susankapuscinskigaylord.com>>

Lotte Glob (UK), <<http://www.lotteglob.co.uk>>

Karen Hanmer (USA), <<http://www.karenhanmer.com>>

Heather Hunter (UK), <<http://www.artistsbooksonline.com>>

Joanne B Kaar (UK), <<http://www.joannebkaar.com>>

Tatana Kellner (USA), <<http://www.tatanakellner.com>>

Susan King (USA), <<http://www.susanking.info>>

Karen Kunc (USA), <<http://www.karenkunc.com>>

Mia Leijonstedt (Finland. Resident Dubai), <<http://www.galleriamia.net>>

Emily Martin (USA), <<http://www.emilymartin.com>>

Kathy Miller (USA), <<http://www.ironbearpress.com>>

Adele Outteridge (Australia), <[http://www.geocities.com/lost\\_and\\_found\\_hk\\_au/artists/adele\\_outteridge.htm](http://www.geocities.com/lost_and_found_hk_au/artists/adele_outteridge.htm)>

Geraldine Pomeroy (Australia), <<http://www.geocities.com/wildfibres>>

Clarissa Sligh (USA), <<http://www.clarissasligh.com>>

Kazuko Watanabe (USA), <<http://www.kazwat.com>>

Heather Weston (UK), <<http://www.bookery.co.uk>>

*Muriel Prince recently completed an MFA at Dundee University, Scotland, and this article is an extract from her dissertation. Muriel has been making artist's books for 15 years, utilising an eclectic mix of materials and structures. A recent interest in digitally produced editions has introduced an exciting new development in her work. Muriel Prince can be contacted at <[muriel.prince@btinternet.com](mailto:muriel.prince@btinternet.com)>.*



## Collaborating with the Dead: looking back on two decades of bookmaking.

By Maureen Cummins

*"If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance."* George Bernard Shaw.

I began printing limited edition books in 1990, and for the first five years I did what I thought one was supposed to do when one started a press: I printed the works of celebrated dead writers. But as challenging as that process was – I was juggling the tasks of editor, artist, letterpress printer, designer, typographer, bookbinder, salesperson, and accountant – I began to feel restless. The romantic, beautifully illustrated books that I'd been producing bore little relation to my own life as a struggling artist in the East Village, and I sensed that there was more of myself that I could bring to the process.

I made a start with *The Masque*, in which I reinterpreted Edgar Allan Poe's classic tale *The Masque of the Red Death* to depict a modern plague, that of the AIDS epidemic. While the dark subject matter of the project resonated for me in a way that my previous work hadn't, the form of the book – finely printed, finely bound – no longer worked, conceptually, materially, or even financially.

The breakthrough came at an unexpected place: the antique market on 26<sup>th</sup> Street and Sixth Avenue in Manhattan. I'd been haunting the place for over a decade, digging through everything from hundred-year-old shopping lists to whalebone corsets, and dragging home old books, printing equipment, and odd objects that I couldn't even identify. There was something so *alive* in all that junk: people long dead, from another time, had touched those things, and then they'd found their way into my own hands and studio. It was like being surrounded by sacred relics, having a connection with the ancestors. In the final months of work on *The Masque*, as I found myself fleeing the printshop in favor of the flea market, I began to sense that I needed to bring that process of serendipitous discovery into my work. On my way there one Sunday morning I was distracted by thoughts about books and business – most of all how I was going to get the next project out without spending thousands of dollars on paper. When I arrived at the market, the first vendor I came to was selling a stash of financial records from a turn-of-the-century stock brokerage firm. There were dozens of oversized financial ledgers, about a hundred envelopes stuffed with stock tickets, and several milk crates full of cancelled checks. All of these materials were so beautiful, with their stamped numerals, slab-serif type, and crow-quill handwriting, that it was an instant epiphany for me: "This can be my paper." I bought the entire lot right there on the spot.

It was the best investment I ever made, paving the way for years of work with found materials. Two projects came directly out of the purchase I made that day: *Checkbook* and *Stocks and Bonds*. In both cases, found printed matter – checks and stock tickets, respectively – served not only as the physical material out of which the books were made, but the inspiration for their content as well. With the

crates of checks it was immediate: after hauling them back to my studio, I started thinking about the meaning of money and credit, and went to look up the word "check" in my dictionary. It offered up over thirty meanings of the word – everything from falconry to chess-playing – but in every case it meant to be stopped, held back, or put down. Those definitions became the main part of the text of the book; I printed them onto the back of the checks, then encased the whole text block within a wallet-style binding that mimicked a modern-day checkbook. The whole thing became a poetic riff on both the experience of a struggling young artist, as well as the politics of economics.



*Checkbook* was the start of a new creative approach for me, one that allowed for an ongoing conversation between the materials and myself. I was working in the studio, surrounded by all the stuff that I'd scavenged, and that proximity led to a kind of unconscious brewing process. Every day I looked through the stock tickets that I'd bought: bundles of them were stuffed into envelopes browning with age, the dates hastily scrawled in pencil on the front. I couldn't stop thinking about them, and began speculating about the phrase



"stocks and bonds," and how odd and telling it was that both those words referred to torture devices. It didn't strike me as random, but a meaningful connection, and I pursued it, spending months researching the corporate use of torture. I gathered information about everything from thumbscrews employed by the East India Company to more modern implements of control such as straitjackets and electric chairs. For the final book, which

faithfully recreated a turn-of-the-century financial ledger, I printed silhouetted images of torture devices directly over the stock tickets, allowing existing typography on the tickets to take on new and disturbing meanings. A cat-o-nine-tails was paired with "Central Leather;" a chain gang with "Union Pacific." The words Westinghouse Electric, in blood red, appeared between the arms of an electric chair, and at the bottom of the ticket, the reminder, "If not correct, please notify immediately."

Around the same time that found ephemera began altering the form of my work, I inherited something which would have a strong influence on its content: a collection of letters that my mother had written over a period of two decades, as well as a diary that she had kept for two years prior to her suicide at the age of 53. My mother, who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, had been in and out of hospitals throughout my childhood, and by the time she took her own life, in 1982, I was nineteen. She and I had never been close, and it had been over a dozen years since her death, but reading those letters and diaries connected me to her in a way that I'd never been while she was alive. I got to know a woman who was not only fiercely intelligent, but funny in the face of trying circumstances: "Time passes very slowly here. At Bellevue, I keep thinking in terms of a concentration camp, but here I think it is more like a laboratory with very kind, watchful scientists putting us (the rats) through our paces." I wanted to resurrect my mother's voice, to bring her story to life; and in 1998, through a grant from Women's Studio Workshop, I was able to do that with a project entitled *Crazy Quilt*. The book, which assembles the experiences of women institutionalized for insanity in the past century, places my mother's experience within the context of other spirited women such as Frances Farmer, Kate Millet and Charlotte Perkins Gilman.



The strong response to *Crazy Quilt* encouraged me (even the negative reactions showed me that the book had hit a nerve), and I forged ahead into further explorations of hidden stories and lost voices. The first of these was *Accounts*, in which I unbound and over-printed a Civil War-era cotton trader's ledger that had been in my possession for almost a decade. I'd bought the book for its beauty alone (its powder blue pages were covered in exquisite paynes-gray script) long before I'd ever considered using such materials in my work; and over the years, as I paged through and admired it, I couldn't help but notice the vast sums that were changing hands. I thought about the slaves whose unpaid labor had allowed for such profits, and wanted, somehow, to bring those two stories together. I ended up doing literally just that: printing excerpts from a series of slave narratives directly onto the ledger pages – the human "accounts" of the cotton trade juxtaposed with the financial ones.



Another book, *Femmes Fatales*, explored a different form of enslavement: objectifying and misogynous attitudes toward women. The impetus for the project came after I had finished *Stocks and Bonds* and still found myself troubled by a pattern that had emerged during my research: whenever an instrument of torture was given a nickname, it was unmistakably feminine. I mulled over this disturbing fact for a year or so time before producing a re-invented Victorian photo album in which I paired the nicknames of historical torture devices – The Virgin, The Widow, The Scottish Maiden, and The Bride of Nuremburg, to name a few – with photographs of beautiful, seductive, and dangerous-looking women. The images, which took me two years to collect and include erotic postcards, vintage snapshots, and Victorian cabinet cards, seem perfectly suited to the names that they're paired with; it is only in the final pages of the book, when the nicknames are listed along with their dark histories, is the secret revealed.



By this time in my career, I was anxious to expand my resources beyond the flea market, and was given the opportunity to do just that during two month-long residencies at historical research archives – Weir Farm and The American Antiquarian Society. The experience of being invited to work with professional collections came as a revelation to me: other obsessive individuals, with infinitely more money and resources, had been acquiring rare and wonderful stuff for centuries, and suddenly I had access to it all (or should I say, photocopies of it all, since I was now working with valuable materials that didn't belong to me). At Weir Farm I produced a project entitled *Ghost Diary*, based on a letter that I discovered in the archive, written by a former Revolutionary



War officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jonathon Rhea. Addressed to “My Beloved Children,” the letter recounted – in memoir fashion – his entire life, including wartime experiences, the loss of his infant son to Typhoid, and his wife’s long suffering and eventual death from a brain tumor. Throughout the narration, Rhea’s language was so vivid, and his voice so immediate, that it took on a transcendent, metaphysical quality. I could feel the presence of this man, his sadness and sense of loss. After months of meditating on his words, I chose to work with the most fragile material I could find – glass. I used a series of vintage glass negatives to complement – rather than literally illustrate – Rhea’s text, which is encased within clear glass panes. The subtle, shifting surfaces of the negatives, which switch in an instant from positive to negative, combine with the drama of the narrative to leave the reader with an abiding sense of man’s mortality, the tenuousness of life and death, and the haunting presence of the past.

The second archive that I worked in, that of the American Antiquarian Society, held over three million items, including books, broadsides, newspapers, and graphic materials. During the month that I lived and worked there, I pored over everything from erotic nineteenth century playing cards to pseudo-scientific Phrenology pamphlets, but ended up concentrating on a collection entitled *Slavery in America*, based upon which I produced two projects. The first of these, entitled *The Business Is Suffering*, was inspired by a folder of business correspondence belonging to a slave-dealing firm, Dickenson and Hill. The letters, which spanned the years 1840-1864, were written by prospective buyers and sellers, as well as agents in the field purchasing “stock.” What struck me about the letters, in addition to their complete and unselfconscious racism, was their increasing tone of panic and desperation as business declined and the threat of bankruptcy loomed. The families and futures of these slave-owners and dealers hung in the balance; they were – paradoxically – in a state of deep dependence. I wanted to bring the voices of these people alive, to give a visceral sense of what it was like to be trapped in a system in which, despite

never be another chance to sell another negro here.” On the facing page, nothing but a blank square remains.



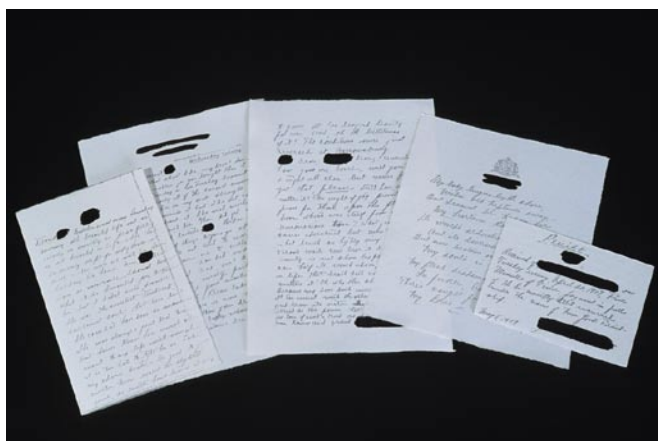
While *The Business Is Suffering* depicted the decline of the slave trade, a print portfolio entitled *Divide and Conquer* examined what happened after it ended. The project was based on a handwritten transcript of testimonies taken in 1871 during a congressional investigation into the activities of The Ku Klux (the early name for The Ku Klux Klan). Witnesses – both black and white – described being beaten, harassed, and driven off their land for crossing the color line in any way, or for voting the radical ticket. A young schoolteacher, Cornelius McBride testified: “I asked them while they were whipping me what I had done to merit such treatment. They said I wanted to make these niggers equal with the white men.” A man named George Gamer related the following: “They cut my back all to pieces, and told me if I did not announce myself a true democrat and pronounce it faithfully, then they would come back and kill me right there. I denounced myself in the paper the Monday following.” The physical form of the project – based on the Surrealist game of Exquisite Corpse – gives the reader/viewer the power to align and combine human forms in a variety of ways, provoking thoughts about how people come together and are torn apart, and what impulses drive them to manipulate and control each other’s lives.

At both AAS and Weir Farm, I had the opportunity to work with priceless materials and collections. But like most people who rummage through junk shops and flea markets, I still dreamed of finding something unique and wonderful of my own (the way a



clear distinctions between victims and oppressors, everyone was suffering. For the final book edition, I carefully edited the letters and paired them with an image of packed black bodies taken from a slave ship diagram. As the reader progresses through the pages – and business turns from bad to worse – bodies begin to disappear. In the final letter, from 1863, an agent complains, “It seems there will

photographer friend had once found an original Edward Curtis print in the five dollar bin at Ursus Books); and in the spring of 2000 that dream came true. While meandering through the flea market, I discovered a cache of over one hundred love letters, stuffed inside a shoebox. The missives chronicled a star-crossed love affair between two men that spanned the years 1906-1909. The writer of the letters, Jules, was a “hellishly insignificant plain schoolteacher,” while the object of his love was a “worldly, luxurious, aristocratic boy” named Ben. The letters tell a dramatic story – involving love triangles, suicide threats and clandestine meetings at Far Rockaway – but it is Jules’ unforgettable voice that makes them so compelling: “Dearest heart, angel, superman, juvenile divinity, my love, my god, my life... Why can’t we be together, live together, die together?” Although it had been nearly a century since Jules made such dramatic declarations, his anguish was real to me. I felt like his confidant, intimately acquainted with his most innermost thoughts and feelings, and was seized by a desire to learn more about his identity and what had become of him after the affair. I began tracking down clues scattered throughout the letters, and after some months of research learned that he later became a writer and made a marriage of convenience to a well-known woman in the arts. I was able to locate a surviving relative, the executrix of his estate, and entered into negotiations with her for the copyright. In the end I was forced, at her insistence, to publish the letters pseudonymously. But I made a point of including a small group of reprinted letters, redacted with black ink. The political implications were clear: after more than a century, “Jules Dykeman” and “Ben Rosenbloom” were still unable to come out of the closet.



Perhaps more than with any other project, in publishing *Far Rockaway* I felt I had succeeded in playing the part of a spiritual medium. Through art I was able to fulfill Jules’ greatest wish, that his love might somehow “defy the world and Death itself.”

A native New Yorker, Maureen Cummins received her BFA from Cooper Union, where she studied drawing, printmaking and book arts. She has been producing artist’s books and prints for over fifteen years, and is included in over one hundred collections internationally, including The Brooklyn Museum, The Walker Art Center, and The Fogg Museum. Her work is represented by Bill and Vicky Stewart of Vamp and Tramp Booksellers. She can be reached at <maureencummins@earthlink.net>.



## The Codex Foundation: Its founding and mission

This interview regarding the founding and the mission of The Codex Foundation with Peter Rutledge Koch (PRK) was conducted by Rollin Milroy (RM), and was originally published in *Amphora*, the Journal of the Alcuin Society, Number 143 June 2006



RM: When was the idea for the foundation first voiced?

PRK: New Year's morning 2005 I awoke with a plan – I would start the ball rolling for a foundation that would support my long cherished desire to see a great international fine arts book fair here in San Francisco. A gathering of presses from around the world in a city with a vital marketplace, a rich book arts tradition, and a very active bibliophilic community.

RM: What made you want to become involved?

PRK: I became involved because no one else was doing it – that is, creating a fine printing/book arts advocacy umbrella non-profit organization representing both the San Francisco tradition and a global fine arts press perspective. There are organizations already in existence that address some of the problems that we are trying to solve – but none that would bring the intellectual history of printing, critical thinking, and the standards of fine printing and fine art in an international context into a single focus. At least not in the San Francisco Bay Area. I became involved in order to get the job started.

RM: Why do you think the book arts are in the situation of requiring something as ambitious as the Codex Foundation? Why did appreciation for the form of the book – the physical aspects – peak but also then decline, and so rapidly, in the last century?

PRK: I am going to divide this into two questions.

First: *Why so ambitious...*?

We are not as ambitious as we sound – we are not trying to solve the war in Iraq – but we are trying to address a real misunderstanding. We are attempting to raise the ante when we talk about the book and typographic arts. Sculpture and printmaking are not misunderstood, they are “fine arts” but fine books are not so generally perceived as fine art. They are, when they are first encountered, often relegated to the pseudo-category of expensive elite books for rich people – a gilded ornament for an idle moment in a well-upholstered library. Now WE know better – but we are the choir! There needs to be a raising of the intellectual bar – real art historical, scholarly, and critical work must be undertaken and published that will bring the discourse to the public mind. To date the only writings published in America that have been addressed to the book as a work of art that bring scholarly and critical focus into play are restricted to the historical avant garde (futurists, surrealists, DADA, Fluxus, and the like) with a few notable exceptions, such as Betty Bright's new book, *No Longer Innocent*, there are no arguments being published that bring the typographic sophistication of say a Hermann Zapf or a Robert Bringhurst into the same discourse with the art-historical mind of a Richard Wollheim, Arthur Danto, or Robert Hughes. There is a great hole in the center of the argument – no exhibitions of contemporary work in major museums! No critical apparatus to support a curatorial decision! No public awareness outside the camps of the converted. Now this situation is partially due to the writers and scholars that have not provided material worth the effort to promote, publish, or even read – but it is also the fault of those able to see the gap but are not crossing over. The CODEX Foundation wants to cross the gap – or at least provide the encouragement to anyone in need of encouragement to build a bridge that will carry the weight of the art historical and intellectually critical integrity that a fine book embodies.

Second: *Why did appreciation for the form of the book - the physical aspects - peak but also then decline, and so rapidly, in the last century?*

Because no one raised the ante! Because the fine press book in the middle of the 20th century was for the most part an exercise in good taste and fine craftsmanship. That extra something was missing which would elevate it to a fine art! It was simply not enough to illustrate a respected text with etchings or woodcuts by a successful artist to bring the book to the level of art. There must be the addition of the spirit at risk – taking risks that, when successful, will generate a spark that illuminates the human condition in all its horror and its glory. The reading public was not able to justify paying a premium price for a fine press book unless it really spoke to their condition – or added to their social perception of themselves – sad but true! Easier to point at a piece of wall art than a book to improve your social standing and perceived sophistication...

The peak of book appreciation was in the period between the wars and before the great stock market crash and is well described in Megan Benton's *Beauty and the Book*, published recently by Yale University Press. Since the Great Depression, there has arisen another culture within our culture and they failed to take the book beautiful as their symbol of sophisticated acquisition and intellectual pride. Other, easier to digest, art forms grabbed their attention;

Italian cars, old *avant-garde* art, fine food and wine. The education of the business class declined, no more Greek classics, no more Latin or even French literature. The intellectual underpinnings that supported the re-publishing of the classics with contemporary art and the publishing of contemporary poetry have all but disappeared. I think we are talking about education here – or a lack of classical education now only available in the very most elite schools – and even there perhaps endangered.



RM: A central, recurring theme of the treatise announcing the foundation's creation is tradition: retaining and sustaining traditional crafts that make up the book arts. There's a difference between retaining the knowledge of outmoded crafts and technologies - places like Williamsburg - and keeping them alive, thriving and relevant to contemporary society. But if crafts and techniques remain in use for as long as they are useful to/valued by a culture, and are then supplanted by others judged better (on whatever basis), what is the value in keeping the old ones alive (some might suggest, artificially so)?

PRK: None, other than an appreciation for their beauty – after all we no longer need race horses – why not just eat them? Well, because they are beautiful animals and you can always enjoy a horse race, a bit of a thrill if you value betting as a means of entertainment, etc...

When a traditional craft is no longer employed creating meaningful and/or useful objects and the actual practice is not enjoyable in itself – then who would mourn its passing but some idiosyncratic historian. But, obviously, such is not the case with letterpress printing or books in general.

RM: The previous question echoes parts of an article by Michael Andrews in *Parenthesis* 11, which addressed many issues common to the Codex Foundation. One statement he made (p. 15) was:

“An art is dead when its only audience is its practitioners. An art is dead when it has no significant impact on the culture at large.”

The Codex Foundation's creation and mission are predicated on a presumption/belief/faith that the book, in its traditional form, will continue to play some role in society (i.e. that it is not a dead

art form). What do you see as evidence of, or justification for this belief? Perhaps asked differently, what relationship do you foresee between the foundation's goals and activities, and contemporary, mainstream publishing?

PRK: I already see mainstream publishing designers poking around my former students' studios and wanting letterpress printing – so no surprises there – and no one is taking seriously the argument that books are dead and over. Only the most demented AI (artificial intelligence) fanatics are still playing that old song. Books are here to stay – a noble invention and a very useful and satisfying one too. They even smell good when properly cared for, make good insulation on outside walls, and decorate your room with colorful graphic art.

RM: In a lecture at Emily Carr last summer, Peter Thomas outlined a scenario that he thinks paves the way for the book arts continued existence and relevance, which is that they finally and unequivocally move into the realm of fine art; are sold as such; and accorded the respect - or at least recognition - that fine art enjoys (at least in the Western context). What do you think of this scenario?

PRK: This is absolutely the minimum requirement and we should all move in that direction.

*This concludes the end of the original interview. What follows is a continuation of that discussion 18 months after the first.*



RM: That first interview about CODEX was done almost exactly one year before the inaugural event, which is now six months gone. I thought it might be interesting to revisit some of the issues raised in our first exchange, and see how things have changed or developed from your perspective.

I think it's fair to say the first exhibition and symposium was a resounding success. All 120 tables in the exhibition hall were sold out well ahead of time, and the symposium was likewise attended to capacity. Over 700 collectors, booksellers, librarians, curators and members of the general public came through during the two days. The response from participants and attendees was sufficiently positive for the foundation to commit to repeating the effort in 2009. What was your personal highlight?

PRK: Thinking back, my first post-event pleasure came at the very end when I heard from a number of exhibitors as they were packing up to leave that they had had a great success and that they wanted to come again. During planning, you can imagine what the



events will be like and you can imagine what the responses will be, but when you have the thing done and the responses are positive – it is a great relief to know that our work was not in vain that there is no doubt that we will do it again.

Another highlight were the direct compliments that we received... on how well organized the whole thing was, the orchestration of events, the smoothness of operation, and the general loveliness of the venue. I must interject here that Susan Filter and a cadre of volunteers organized by J.O. Bugental worked like sand-hogs around their day-jobs to make this event sing. Susan, in particular, worked for the better part of two years helping me to create the foundation (the paperwork is pure drudgery), plan the symposium and organize the book fair. Collaborating with such hard working and enthusiastic people is the highlight of highlights!



RM: Every new endeavor experiences growing pains. Can you share the most common praise, and criticism, for the first CODEX? What were some of the lessons learned, and how will they be reflected in 2009?

PRK: The most common praise I heard was that the speakers were brilliant, the book sales exceeded all expectations, and the venue was fantastic – all three compliments in about equal measure – in other words that we had not created a monster but rather a very wonderful event. The first complaints that we heard as we were getting started were from those perpetually grumpy types who ask questions like “What does Codex mean? It sounds like a disease...” and other such disingenuous nonsense. The few criticisms we heard post-symposium were that curators and collectors did not have enough time to visit each of the exhibitors; some did not like the panel format; a wish was expressed to see more of the young and adventurous included; and we heard more than once that exhibitors wished for more time together to look at each other’s work.

In response, in 2009 we will have longer fair hours and fewer speakers. I believe that in the interest of enlarging the fair hours the panel format will not be repeated in 2009. We are, however, considering opening up a public forum (town meeting style) with topics proposed in advance and addressed through moderators. Finally we will try to include a longer set-up time to enable the

exhibitors to visit one another’s tables.

RM: As with any fair like this, exhibitors’ sales ranged widely. Do you have any sense of the kinds of publishers, or books, that did particularly well?

PRK: As far as I could tell, the majority of publishers did well. I have heard via gossip that a few did not do well but the ones named were not confined to any particular category or economic spectrum. I have also heard from many individuals that the fair was the absolute best they had ever participated in. This from France, Germany, England, USA, etc.

RM: What reactions or responses did you have to our initial interview?

PRK: The responses to our initial interview have all been positive. I have heard from several sources that it was VERY informative. So perhaps the interview form is effective, no?



Stefan Bartkowiak and Steve Woodall at Bartkowiak’s opening

RM: The major issues framing the ‘07 event, as discussed in our interview, had to do with raising appreciation of the book arts as fine art. Were there any issues related to this, or even unrelated, that arose as a result of the ‘07 – issues that had not been on your radar previously?

PRK: My radar has detected no incoming issues. We are all experiencing a renewed interest in the book as a physical object. An interest, I would hazard, fueled by the widespread impact of the digital media. Information is becoming more and more dematerialized. But in the search for fulfillment, we are eternally the same animal, seeking beauty and pleasure (*luxé, calme, et volupté*). The perpetual seeking for newer and bigger risks and pleasures by the avant-gardist, the classicist and the populist remains unabated. We all search for the quality life. *Mais, chacun a son goût – non?*

I have, however, as a result of talking among publishers in the mainstream about the CODEX events, heard over and over the thought expressed that we are now entering a time when the Book as a Work of Art will be the NEW DIMENSION. I always thought so – but when the mainstreamers think that thought as well, we must

be on the verge of a media swell. The mass-market book has become as fast, cheap, and available as it ever will be – where now to go but slow, dear, and rare?



*Bartkowiak exhibition at the San Francisco Center for the Book*

RM: I want to follow up on an argument you made in that interview, regarding the book arts' current place in the fine arts world. You said, "...there has arisen another culture within our culture, and they failed to take the book beautiful as their symbol of sophisticated acquisition and intellectual pride." You followed this comment by laying the blame for this failure on the disappearance of a "classical education." The word "failed" is a loaded one: it implies willful neglect or some shortcoming. Why do you lay this failure at the culture? Might it not be that the book has failed to speak to this culture in an engaging, contemporary way, i.e. that the art form failed (or at least, the people practicing it)? And why must appreciation for book arts be based on a classical foundation? Why cannot the art form find a way to speak to this "culture within a culture"? There's no argument that there is a wealth of material and tradition to explore in the classics, but surely the same could be said for book arts focused exclusively on a contemporary foundation - education, cultural, technological, etc.

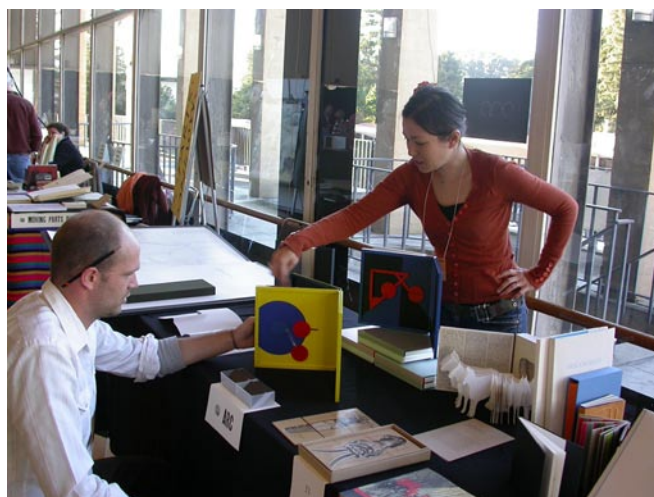
PRK: You cannot lay the blame on "the Book." There are many books that are widely considered works of art by both museum curators and the art conscious public. Especially at the easy-reading pop-art level of an Ed Ruscha or similar artists who have made a museum's top ten list. And then there is the Book of Kells. The numbers are relatively small however. And so is public exposure to the idea of a book as an art form like furniture, ceramics, and photography. Book connoisseurship and bibliographic knowledge is rare and getting rarer as schools turn to google, libraries become information stations, and museums marginalize the book in favor of "blockbuster" bestsellers and the inevitable Impressionists. The "classical" education I refer to is not so much Greek and Latin studies as it is art history and literature taught as if it were desirable for the betterment of the citizen and not merely for creating specialists in higher education. If major exhibitions are curated in a way that explains biblio-aesthetics, complete with historical antecedents and influences – then we are moving forward instead of regressing, or just standing still preaching to the choir.

RM: Education and fostering greater appreciation of the book arts are two of the foundation's original goals. But there was not much promotion of the '07 event to the local general public - the

majority of people attending were very much already in the choir, to use your phrase. Was it a conscious decision to not go after the general public? Do you have any different plans for promoting the '09 fair?

PRK: On the contrary, we spent 12% of our budget on local advertising. We had local newspaper listings and local arts advertising, television coverage, newsletter, blog and e-list advertising. Next time we will have all that AND positive buzz. We heard from people at the fair that they saw the television spot and the San Francisco Chronicle notice. But as far as local news saturation coverage goes – we didn't have a track record in 2007 and now I hope that will change. Still, over 900 people came to the fair in addition to the 250 symposium participants, exhibitors and sponsors. This was our first time out and with some help from our friends, I hope that we will get the message out that the 2009 CODEX will be well worth a visit. We must, however, carefully balance the act since there is a danger of overcrowding.

I believe that our first obligation is to the exhibitors and to get the buyers (the collectors and the curators) into the fair. We accomplished that by two years of making personal calls to collectors and curators and advertising heavily in book collecting magazines, bibliophile and book arts journals, and e-lists.



I should add that we welcome suggestions and help that will bring the CODEX Book Fair into public consciousness. We welcome interviews, reviews, and blogs; and wish to expand our links and add to our mailing lists.

RM: A question I should have asked in the first interview: how do you see the CODEX fair and symposium fitting with/against Pyramid Atlantic and the annual Oak Knoll fine press fair?

PRK: We fit in perfectly! Oak Knoll and Pyramid Atlantic are each especially strong in one area. Oak Knoll is strong in Anglo-American wood engraving and the English and American fine press that grew out of the Arts and Crafts movements in the late 19th Century. Pyramid Atlantic is especially strong in the post-dada, post-surrealist, and post-fluxus artist book that has grown up within the field of American printmaking and book binding.



If the only consideration were geo-political, California in itself has a rich and diverse community of artists, printers, designers, and craftsmen that work in book form. In addition, San Francisco is a great market place and has a supercharged economy. In the Bay Area and Berkeley in particular there is a highly concentrated, international, and truly cosmopolitan community interested in books, literature and the fine arts.

and...

At the CODEX fair we are making every effort to invite an international base of exhibitors and equally an international clientele of book collectors. Our ambition is to grow into a world-class cosmopolitan book fair in a more broadly defined field of "The Book as a Work of Art." At CODEX every effort is being made to include the full spectrum of artists, artisans, printers, publishers and artist's representatives in equal measure, from the most contemporary avant-garde to the most exciting of the fine press on an international scale. We are developing a synergy at CODEX with the San Francisco International Antiquarian Book Fair which is one of the largest in the world, if not THE largest, and it is very well attended by Asian, European, and North & South American exhibitors and collectors. The CODEX International Book Fair more closely resembles the book arts exhibit sector of the Frankfurt Book Fair that has been so successfully promoted by Heinz Stefan Bartkowiak and his wonderful and generous wife Wibke and their friends since 2000. In consultation with the Bartkowiaks, Clemens-Tobias Lange, and other exceptional English and European publishers we have invited nearly 60 exhibitors that we first met in the Frankfurt and Oxford Book Fairs in 2005 - 6. Our highest priority now is to invite new exhibitors from Europe, Asia, Australia, and South America – wherever we can find exciting artists and presses outside our own North American borders.

RM: If support from the community and public warranted, could CODEX get bigger - more exhibitors, more speakers?

PRK: The thought troubles my sleep. Yet that is not to say that we wish to always remain the same – but my fear is if we get bigger, we will be forced into high rent quarters, and consequently become more commercially oriented. We will know better after 2009 if we need to expand to keep up with the interest.

RM: Might there be any thought about holding the event in different locations - moving it around the country, or even the world - or will it always be based in Berkeley?

PRK: In my perfect world, we stay in Berkeley where the semi-tropical climate in February is delightful, the food is as good as it gets anywhere in the world, and we can take full advantage of the synergy that we generate in conjunction with the San Francisco International Antiquarian Book Fair and all the rest of the great San Francisco book arts scene.

However, I can envision an event to coincide with the Venice Biennale (we are exploring that idea already), or some other established fine arts venue .... let's see what rears its lovely head! If some enterprising soul wants to help us throw the party in Venice, Berlin, Paris or Tokyo the CODEX Foundation will collaborate!

Photo Credits: Sarah Bodman, Dimitry Sayenko, Kitty Maryatt, and Susan Skarsgaard.

A native of Montana, Peter Rutledge Koch got his start in printing in Missoula when he founded/ Montana Gothic: A Journal of Poetry, Literature & Graphics/ and the Black Stone Press, a publishing imprint and letterpress printing office, in 1974 in tandem with artist Shelley Hoyt. Four years later, the press relocated to San Francisco, where Koch embarked on a one-year apprenticeship with printer and book designer Adrian Wilson at the Press in Tuscany Alley. Koch has operated his own design and printing studio continuously for over thirty years. A creative force and personality in Bay Area fine press and artist book design, printing, and publishing, Koch's work has earned an international reputation. Since the dissolution of Black Stone Press in 1983 (the archives are housed at the University of Delaware Library), he has published under numerous imprints, creatively named to suit different facets of his work: Peter Koch, Printers; Hormone Derange Editions; and Editions Koch. He variously describes himself as Artist/Collaborationist, Designer Printer and Publisher, and Cowboy Surrealist. His works include-but are by no means limited to-editions of ancient Greek philosophers, the musings of maverick poets, and the images of world-renowned wood engravers and photographers. Editions Koch specializes in publishing limited edition/ livres d'artistes, / artist books, portfolios, and what Koch describes as his "text transmission objects." In addition to his creative and collaborative ventures, Koch's studio handles private and commercial work on commission. He teaches "The Hand Made Book In Its Historical Context" and printing on the Albion hand press at UC-Berkeley's Bancroft Library, and recently co-founded The CODEX Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to promoting and preserving the arts of the book, and the CODEX International Bookfair. He can be reached via the CODEX Foundation website at <<http://www.codexfoundation.org>>.



## Cairo in August: Researching the Nag Hammadi Codices

By Julia Miller and Pamela Spitzmueller

The very best thing about being in book arts is the random qualities of the people you meet, the books you discover and the places you end up. Goals are good but elude completion, proofs are before your eyes just before they disappear forever, and sometimes it pays to open every book cover, not just the pretty ones.

This past August I spent a month that combined a week teaching with two weeks taking classes at the Montefiascone School in Italy, then flying across the Mediterranean to Cairo to spend the final week on something like a quest visiting the Coptic Museum to see and study the leather covers of the Nag Hammadi Codices. The Montefiascone School is directed by Cheryl Porter and takes place every summer in August. The course consists of four weeks of instruction, each week on a separate topic. The classes focus on historical bookbinding structures and related areas and you can register for a single week or all of them if you prefer. The proceeds from the workshop fees go to support the rescue of a white library (composed almost entirely of vellum and paper case bindings) housed in the local monastery.



The two classes I took were so completely inspirational that I urge you to inveigle these teachers to your neighborhood to present their excellent workshops: *Making an Armenian Book* taught by the team of Caroline Checkley-Scott from the Wellcome Library, and John Mumford and Father Vreg Nersessian from the British Library, and *Medieval Arab Bookbindings in Spain: history, structure, materials and decoration* taught by Ana Beny, private conservator in Spain.

The class I taught at Montefiascone was about ...the Nag Hammadi ... and the participants were receptive to the binding and good work was done. The 4<sup>th</sup> century books known as the Nag Hammadi Codices were discovered in 1945, in an urn buried in an escarpment across the Nile from the town of Nag Hammadi. The find included twelve single quire codices (I-XII) of papyrus, tacketed into leather covers; also found was an unbound tractate (Codex XIII), placed inside the cover of Codex VI. The cover of

Codex XII and most of its text disappeared after discovery. Many of the surviving texts, all written in Coptic, are previously unknown Gnostic writings; the most important text is considered to be the Gospel of Thomas in Codex II, the only known complete copy of that Gospel. Although scholars agree that the codex format existed as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, evidence is scarce and depends largely on papyrus texts with lacuna that may be holes pierced for tackets. These earliest codices, almost all single quire, may have been held together by tackets stabbed through the side of the folded papyrus textblock, through the spine fold of the quire, without covers, or into papyrus wrappers. The 4<sup>th</sup> century Nag Hammadi group is the largest collection of bindings discovered to date representing single quire bindings bound into leather covers, where the leather covers survive. By the time the Nag Hammadi were written and bound in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, multi-quire books with texts written on parchment, sewn in link stitch styles and bound into wooden covers were also being produced.

Montefiascone is wonderful and worth a visit just for itself. After the classes ended, preparing to leave Monte to return to Rome and fly to Cairo, it was sad to leave Italy, to be not only homesick but, thanks to the intensity of the classes, exhausted too. The visit to Cairo was a hazy plan that had seemed like a good idea at the time it was planned (February). The amount of preparation involved, contacting the Museum for permission to visit and study the Nag Hammadi, the transatlantic misunderstandings (the Museum Director probably received about twelve faxes of everything), the fear that the permission that had finally been granted in a somewhat vague letter would not result in anything but admission to the Museum...it really seemed completely crazy to go on to Cairo with so little remaining energy and a lack of assurance about the reception at the Museum.

But we went. By “we” I mean myself and Pam Spitzmueller, my friend and mentor. And let us tell you, fly Alitalia whenever you can. They provide a pleasant atmosphere and the coach seats are very comfortable. We had a beautiful trip across the sea and were astounded in turn by the green extent of the Nile delta as we arrived in North Africa and by the immensity of the city of Cairo when the plane made its approach to the airport. The reality of Cairo is that the city never stops moving and is never silent, we had to get used to that and used to things like crossing a street in a whole different way. We think we adjusted well; we were charmed more often than we were dismayed and the people we met were friendly and kind and that got us over the dismaying times. We would not deceive you by saying that everything was perfectly easy, it wasn't, but the trip was worth it.





We arrived in Cairo on a sweltering Sunday afternoon and after several adventures got ourselves settled in a hotel along the Corniche el-Nil, not too far from the Egyptian Museum. We went to the Coptic Museum immediately the next morning, taking our first of many rides in one of the black and white taxis that are among the wonderful experiences of Cairo. The Coptic Museum is in Old Cairo, truly the very oldest part of the city, dating to Pharaonic times; the Museum is located in an enclave of ancient Christian churches and the historic Ben Ezra Synagogue. The Museum reopened in 2005 after renovation and it is a lovely, peaceful, and beautifully appointed series of small galleries with excellent exhibits.



We arrived at the Museum that first morning and in meeting with the Director of the Museum were immediately welcomed. We were introduced to the General Director of Restoration and Conservation and given a tour of the conservation facility where we also met most of the conservation staff. During the tour we saw an extraordinarily rare artifact in the leather conservation area: a leather shroud of the type that usually covered the bodies of wealthy Egyptians buried in the Fayum district. The Fayum is an area southwest of Cairo near Lake Qaroun; it came to its greatest prominence during the Ptolemaic period and is a rich archaeological site. The mummies were buried with exquisitely painted wooden portrait masks, and some with the body shrouds. The portrait masks are well known and survive in numerous collections around the world, many without provenance; the shrouds were usually discarded by the grave robbers who took the valuable and portable masks. We were told at the Museum that the leather shroud in their collection is one of the few in existence anywhere in the world. The shroud is a wonderful example of late Coptic decoration, painted, with cut-outs and vellum lacings and recalls the decorative effect of one of the more elaborate Hamuli or Edfu bindings (1).

Although we had hoped to spend our entire week studying the Nag Hammadi it didn't work out that way. We suspect the Museum staff initially were as doubtful that we would show up as we were about whether we would be expected, so because they needed to get organized for us we made our arrangements with the director of Conservation to start our work the following morning. We spent the

afternoon of that first day very profitably indeed, however, touring the public galleries of the Museum, coming away impressed by the elegant exhibits and the richness of the collection, with many of the pieces being of particular interest to those interested in the book arts.

One of the larger galleries is devoted to the Nag Hammadi Library, with nine of the leather covers on display, in a simple but effective way. We had already looked at many galleries by the time we rounded a corner to enter the archway into the gallery holding the Nag Hammadi covers. It was stunning to suddenly see them, and is a vivid memory still.

The Coptic Museum also has quite an array of rare illuminated and decorated manuscripts on display (a nice color catalog is available (2)). These colorful and imaginative figures of people and birds and abstract designs. Also shown are a number of metal book shrines encrusted with gems and embossed with text and decoration.

Displayed in a huge etched glass cube, keeping the viewer at a ten foot distance, a manuscript described as the world's oldest book is given a place of honor in the Coptic Museum. The Mudil Psalter (3) was unearthed in 1984 during a somewhat routine cemetery excavation by Egyptian antiquities staff. The book was removed from a girl's grave – an amazing and somewhat bewildering find. This 'oldest complete Psalter' is from the 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E. As with the Nag Hammadi find, no photographs were taken of the manuscript in situ or report written of the incident. The book leaves were wet and stuck together, though they were successfully separated by an Egyptian conservator, Nasry Iskander. There are 252 leaves and they look in remarkably good condition.

We stared at it from all angles, mesmerized, and continuously tripping the timed case illumination to see it again. There is no sewing thread but sewing stations are visible and 'tooled' leather fragments of spine and wrapping bands survived. This volume is one of nine books making up the book family identified by John Sharpe III as early Egyptian (pre-7<sup>th</sup> century) multi-quire manuscripts sewn through the fold with wood boards, leather spines and wrapping bands with bone peg closures. We hadn't expected to see this magnificent manuscript, and at the end of the day we slowly evaporated out of the museum to ponder our luck.

We were originally limited to two partial days of contact time with the Nag Hammadi covers and although that will sound unfortunate it is understandable in light of the amount of time from conservation and administrative staff we would be tying up. Two paper conservation staff, Mrs. Sharine and Mrs. Abeer, were assigned to supervise our work and two of the other staff, including the leather conservator, Mrs. Ebtesam Mohammed Zaky, were allowed the time to observe our procedures. When the covers were brought to the examination room in groups of three, the administrative assistant to the Museum director, accompanied by two Museum guards, carried the covers personally. After the examination of each set of covers the process was repeated, the covers returned to the exhibit case and another set brought to the examination room. We believe our enthusiasm and careful attention

to the restrictions given us at the beginning of our study encouraged the director of Conservation to allow us a third day of examination, and that was a great boon. Although we had such limited time we feel that everyone we worked with at the Museum were most generous in their support for our research, kind and helpful and above all, very keen about what we were doing and why we were interested in studying the covers. We had a lot of fun figuring each other out through a barrier of no Arabic on our side and a limited amount of English on their side. At any given time there were four to six women in a very small room, dancing around each other to see, to arrange, to record, drinking tea, and laughing, laughing so much.

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Although Pam and I had had our first sight of the covers while they were still in the exhibit gallery during our tour of the Museum that first day, seeing the covers at close quarters in the examination room was a surprising experience. Working for years on models for class instruction from mostly black and white photos of the bindings and studying the same photos to prepare for our research had not prepared us for the beauty of those sturdy, functional pieces of leather, the rich colors of the leather, the craftsmanship. They are terribly marked by both loss and stains but are so clearly surviving their contact with modern civilization.



We are happy to report that by and large the leather covers of the Nag Hammadi are in excellent condition and much cherished by the Museum. Some further removal of cartonnage was performed on several of the covers since the documentary photographs were taken that appear in the *Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices* (4). There is some resultant damage to the inside and in at least one case, the outside of the leather covers. We believe based on the dates of removal mentioned in the *Facsimile* and other sources that most of this removal was done very soon after the documentary photos were taken in the early 1960s.

Although we were not allowed to handle the covers, we were able to examine them closely with magnification as well as document their general appearance and structural elements with a digital camera provided by the Conservation Department. The leather is extremely 'alive', showing little in the way of red rot and retaining a great deal of flexibility, a testament to the quality of tannage by the ancients. The Nag Hammadi were large books, the covers measuring up to 28 cm high x 40 cm wide. The leathers used for the bindings are thought to be either sheepskin or goatskin; in one case (Codex IX) both types are used in a pieced cover. The colors of the leather range from golden brown to almost black. Most of the Nag Hammadi covers had top and bottom edge ties and foreedge wrapping bands; many of them also had quire stays and tackets. Almost all of these accessory structures survive, at least partially intact. We observed several previously undocumented structural elements and were able to answer unresolved questions about, for example, the style of the corner tackets and the tie attachments. The early documentary photos of the inside of the covers in the *Facsimile* are on the whole very good, but the images of the outside of the covers tend to be very poor in comparison. The outer covers of only three of the codices (I, II, III) are photographed fully unfolded and thus the evidence of attachment styles and the overall condition of the outer covers on the *Facsimile* photos tend to be obscured by lack of completeness in the photos as well as poor resolution. We sought during our examination of the covers to visually verify and photograph structures that were described in a somewhat confusing manner in the *Facsimile* descriptions. We were able to study nine of the ten covers (5) possessed by the Coptic Museum but our time with each cover was fairly brief; we both consider this first visit as exactly that and plan to return to the Museum for further study. The photographs we were allowed to take utilizing the in-house digital camera are a combination of okay and excellent; the camera was a bit uncooperative at times and the language barrier increased the technological difficulties. When the time allowed for our project came to an end we were each given a CD of the photos by the director of the Conservation Laboratory, a most generous act. You can understand why, after so much effort, we each, when we arrived at our respective homes, went straight to our computers to verify that the images could be read. We have spent the months subsequent to our visit to the Museum organizing our notes, studying the photographs and discussing our conclusions preparatory to presenting our images of the covers and an assessment of the more puzzling structural elements of the bindings to our bookbinding colleagues in future joint presentations.



Although most of our time in Cairo was spent visiting the Coptic Museum we were able to fit in short excursions to other parts of the city, to Giza and Saqqara and to several other museums.



One afternoon, after several hours of intense study at the Coptic Museum, we ventured into the un-air-conditioned parts of the Egyptian Museum. It is an out of place pink edifice in the mostly earth colored buildings of the city. We went looking for everyday possessions - particularly of leather or papyrus. We were rewarded with massive curly wigs with multitudes of long, skinny braids; chariot pieces with tawed skin lashings; writing tools for papyrus; vellum book leaves; red poison tipped ivory arrows with reed shafts; rows of painted coffins; areas of the museum that seemed more like storage rooms than exhibit spaces; and a small decorative panel of white leather with green, pink, and gold layers. Different elements were cut to form abstract mirror image patterns and delicately stitched over each other. Cameras were forbidden, so we were unable to document these extraordinary things.

We would say that for a first visit to Cairo to finally see this great city and begin a research project so important to us – our trip in August was a great success. We were not able to spend any time in the Museum Library going through whatever remains of written and photographic documentation on the bindings from the time of

discovery and that research will be a major focus of our next visit to the Museum.

And next time, we will not go in August.

## Endnotes

(1) The Hamuli and Edfu collections contain multi-quire bindings with parchment texts and decorated leather covers over papyrus pasteboards; the Hamuli find of nearly 50 bindings are owned by the Pierpont Morgan Library and many of the Edfu bindings are in the British Library. For further information see 'Coptic Bookbindings at the Pierpont Morgan Library: their History and Preservation' by Deborah Evetts in the Bookbinding 2000 *Proceedings* and 'The Edfu Collection of Coptic Books' by Jen Lindsay in *The New Bookbinder*, Vol. 21, 2001.

(2) *Illustrations from Coptic Manuscripts*, Cairo: Lehnert & Landrock, 2000.

(3) 'The Earliest Bindings with Wooden Board Covers. The Coptic Contribution to Binding Construction', by John Sharpe III, ERICE Conference *Preprints*, 22-29 April 1996.

(4) UNESCO (1984), 'The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices.' Edited by James Robinson et al. Leiden: J. Brill.

(5) We were able to study the covers of Codices II-V and VII- XI; Codex VI was not available at the time of our visit and the cover of Codex I, known as the Jung Codex, is owned by the Schøyen Collection in Spikstad, Norway.

*Pamela Spitzmueller is the Chief Conservator for Special Collections in the Harvard University and College Libraries where she directs the Special Collections Conservation Lab in the Weissman Preservation Center. Pam has previously worked in Rare Book Conservation at the University of Iowa Libraries, the Library of Congress, and the Newberry Library in Chicago. Her special interests are historical book structures and book sewing in particular. She makes one of a kind books, has exhibited widely, and sometimes finds time to teach workshops.. She can be reached at <pamela\_spitzmueller@harvard.edu>.*

*Julia Miller is a bench-trained book conservator and spent ten years on the staff of the University of Michigan Conservation and Book Repair Lab. Now a conservator in private practice, her primary interest is researching the history of bookbinding structure and style. She teaches workshops on historical models frequently in Ann Arbor and around the country. She has been a volunteer for a number of years in several UofM rare collections, identifying and describing bindings for the online catalog. She is the recipient of a 2008 Samuel H. Kress Foundation/FAIC conservation publication fellowship. She can be reached at <juvam@comcast.net>.*

## A New Variation on Board Slotting: Case binding meets in-boards binding

By Angela M. Andres

### Abstract

Board slotting creates a very strong and aesthetically integrated board reattachment for many books; however, books with significant losses in their spine material require additional structural compensation. An adapted board slotting technique that addresses this specific concern is discussed.

### Introduction

In spring 2007, the Barbara Goldsmith Book and Paper Conservation Laboratory at New York University Libraries acquired a Peachey Board Slotting Machine. Jeffrey S. Peachey, the machine's designer and manufacturer, spent two days at the lab training full-time staff (Conservation Librarian Laura McCann and Conservation Technicians Lou DiGennaro and me) to operate the machine. Peachey also demonstrated finishing techniques for slotted books and provided reading recommendations for further study.<sup>1</sup>

In the weeks that followed the initial workshop, we at the lab experimented with board slotting on a selection of withdrawn books in varying states of disrepair. We were extremely pleased with the strength of the board reattachment achieved through board slotting and found that we soon became comfortable enough with the process to complete repairs relatively quickly.<sup>2</sup>

We limited the introductory phase of our board slotting program to 19th and 20th century circulating books, with an emphasis on the durability and usability of the finished volume. In selecting candidates for board slotting, we found many books with detached boards and partially or completely missing spine material. These volumes certainly benefited from the secure reattachment of their boards through board slotting, but the absence of original spine material, particularly the head and tail caps, left the spine exposed and vulnerable. In addition, the result lacked the aesthetic integration of a slotted volume with its original spine material replaced.

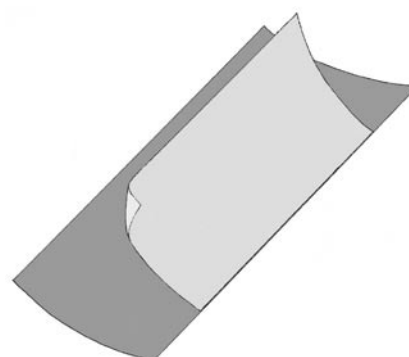
Drawing upon trial and error and our training with Jeff Peachey, I devised a way to finish slotted books that are missing original spines. This method combines elements of board slotting and traditional rebinding to create a strong board attachment, new spine material, and reconstructed head and tail caps that offer some measure of aesthetic compensation for the lost spine material. Unlike most board slotting treatments, this technique requires the machine-milled slot to extend all the way through the ends of the boards. For this reason, this treatment may not be suitable for rare or special collections volumes; it is best suited to volumes with detached boards and all or most of their original spines missing. Following is an illustrated step-by-step description of this technique.

### Procedure

Begin by preparing the boards for slotting by trimming away or lifting the endpapers along the spine edges. Lightly consolidate the leather with a Klucel-G/ethanol solution. Clean the spine of the book and consolidate with paste and Japanese paper, if necessary. Slot the boards along the entire length of the spine edges and through both ends. The slot must accommodate four layers of material; for most books of average size, a 0.020" blade creates an appropriately sized slot.

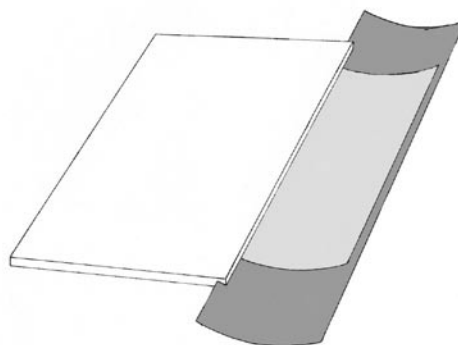
For the first hinge layer, laminate cotton or linen fabric with paste to a Japanese paper such as Kizukishi or Sekishu3 and trim to one and one-half inches (1 ½") shorter than the length of the book and one and one-half inches (1 ½") wider than the spine. For the second hinge layer, the replacement spine, line colored Kozo paper with Kizukishi or Sekishu (see note 3) and trim to one and one-half inches (1 ½") longer than the length of the book and one and one-half inches (1 ½") wider than the spine. It is sometimes helpful to apply Klucel-G/ethanol solution to the Kozo paper at this stage to minimize the fuzziness that can occur with handling.

Center the fabric layer on the spine piece and adhere the two pieces along one edge with a narrow bead of PVA or thick paste (fig.1). Allow to dry under weight.



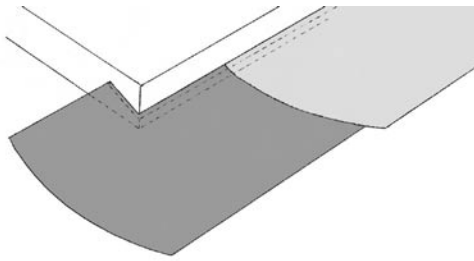
*Fig.1 The assembled hinge and spine pieces*

When the assembled hinge and spine pieces are dry, apply PVA or paste to the inside of the slot in the first board and insert the lining/spine pieces into the slot (figs. 2 and 3). Nip the board and dry under weight.



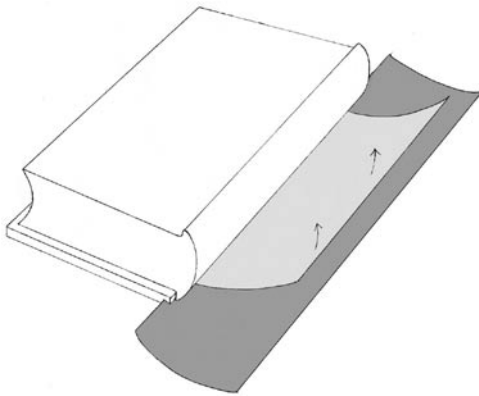
*Fig.2 Position of lining/spine pieces in slot*



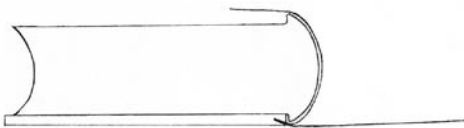


*Fig. 3 Detail of new material in slot*

Glue or paste up the spine and align the text block on the board. Wrap the cloth hinge around the spine, adhering well with a bone folder or your fingers as you go (figs. 4 and 5).

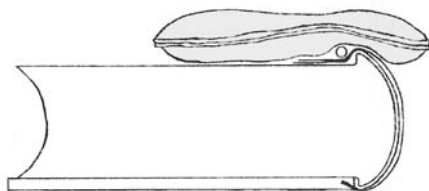


*Fig. 4 Lining the spine*



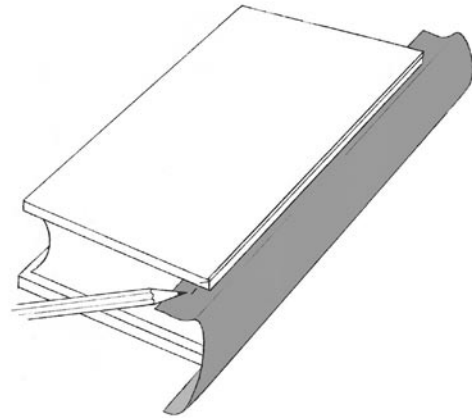
*Fig. 5 Position of lining and spine pieces*

Apply PVA mix (half PVA and half methylcellulose) to the cloth hinge along the shoulder (be careful not to get glue on the spine) and wrap the spine piece around the spine, keeping the spine piece tight against the book and molding it around the shoulder while adhering the two hinge layers together at the shoulder to form a natural hollow. Dry under weight. I find it helpful to place a skewer or thin dowel in the shoulder between the hinge and the weight to help shape the hinge as it dries (fig.6).



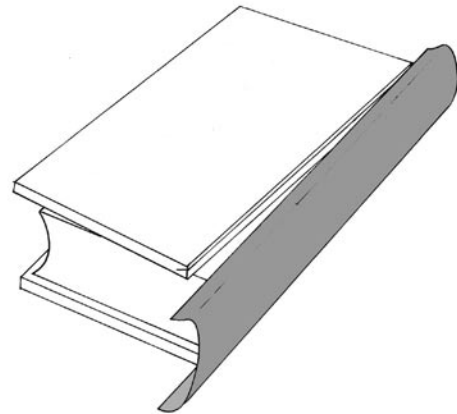
*Fig. 6 Shaping the hinge with a skewer*

When the hinge is dry, it must be trimmed to fit the slot in the second board. Place the board on the text block, align it as desired, and lightly mark the slot depth on the colored Kozo at both head and tail (fig.7).



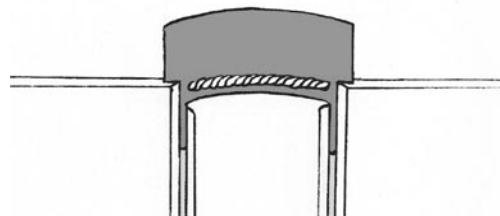
*Fig. 7 Marking the slot depth on hinge for trimming*

Remove the board, place a small cutting mat or waste board on the text block, and carefully trim the hinge to the marked size. Apply PVA or paste to the slot and gently insert the hinge into the slot while aligning the board on the text block (fig.8). Dry under weight.



*Fig. 8 Attaching the second board*

When the second hinge is dry, glue a piece of hemp cord (of an appropriate length and thickness) to the head and tail turn-ins. The book should appear as in fig.9; the Kozo spine piece is shaded dark gray, and the pale gray-shaded cloth hinge is just visible as a narrow strip on either side of the text block.



*Fig. 9 The boards attached and spine piece ready to be turned in*

Apply PVA mix or paste to the head and tail flaps, turn them in over the cords, and allow to dry. Fig.10 shows the finished book with the turn-in adhered over the pastedown to better illustrate its placement; however, to turn in under the pastedown would require only a very small amount of lifting.

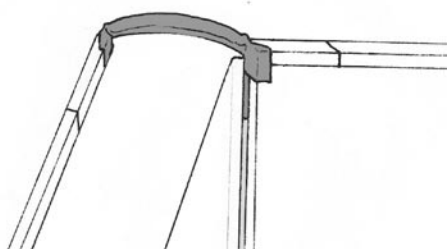


Fig.10 The turned-in spine piece

Finish the book by pasting down the lifted endpapers and reinforcing the inner hinge with tissue, if necessary. The colored Kozo may be toned to better match the book's original leather, and any exposed board edges may also be toned or mended with the same colored Kozo if desired. Attach any fragments of the original spine to the new spine with PVA mix or paste as appropriate.



Fig.11 Detail of a book finished with this technique



Fig.12 Detail of the reconstructed head cap



Fig.13 Detail of the hinge. Losses in the endpapers have been left unmended to show the hinge structure.

## Conclusion

By combining board slotting and rebacking, this adapted technique makes use of the best qualities of each treatment when applied to books with detached boards and missing spine material. First and most importantly, this method creates a very sturdy and durable board attachment. Second, it is fast, especially when a ready stock of lined fabrics and Kozo paper is on hand. Additionally, there is no need to lift leather or cloth from the boards, which saves time and minimizes disturbance to the covering material. Finally, the reconstructed spine provides added protection for the text block and unifies the appearance of the finished volume.

## Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Laura McCann and Lou DiGennaro. Thanks also to Jeff Peachey, Clare Andres and Cathleen McIntosh.

## Notes

(1) Christopher Clarkson, "Board Slotting-A New Technique for Re-attaching Bookboards," Conference Papers Manchester 1992 (London: The Institute of Paper Conservation, 1992).

Jeffrey S. Peachey, "New Possibilities for Board Slotting," *The Bonefolder: an e-journal for the bookbinder and book artist* 2.2 (2006): 28-32, 15 January 2008 <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder/vol2no2contents.htm>>.

Edward Simpson, "Setting up a Board-Slotting Programme," *The Paper Conservator* 18 (1994): 77-89.

Friederike Zimmermann, "Board Slotting: A Machine-Supported Book Conservation Method," *The Book and Paper Group Annual* 19 (2000): 19-25 <<http://aic.stanford.edu/sg/bpg/annual/v19/bp19-25.html>>

(2) Most books treated with this method are finished in twenty to forty minutes, or about the time it takes to do a standard reback.

(3) The weight of Japanese paper selected will depend on the size of the book and the weight of the other lining materials being used (the fabric and Kozo paper).

Angela M. Andres is a Conservation Technician at the Barbara Goldsmith Book and Paper Conservation Laboratory at New York University Libraries. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and a Master of Arts in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She can be reached at <[angelamandres@yahoo.com](mailto:angelamandres@yahoo.com)>.



## The Twined Binding

By Roberta Lavadour

The twined binding was created for the 2007 Guild of Book Workers Standards of Excellence Conference. I wanted to design two separate bindings that spoke to the distinct “Cowboy and Indian” heritage of Eastern Oregon, and considered both rawhide braiding and traditional Plateau basket weaving as inspiration.

Rawhide braiding is a craft practiced in several of the saddle-making studios in Pendleton, most notably by Tim George, who produces intricate working cowboy gear for the legendary Hamley & Co.

My brother-in law Joey Lavadour (*Walla Walla*) is part of an unbroken chain of basket weaving on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, where he was born and raised and lives today. Taught to twine baskets by Walla Walla elder Carrie Sampson, he has been instrumental in continuing the tradition and leading a revival in the art of basket making.



*First structural weaving model*

After pursuing each book structure separately and hitting many dead ends, the epiphany came when the two ideas intersected. Combining the twining technique with the durable papercase paper I'd been using to simulate rawhide, the design finally crystallized.

The basic twining technique itself was and is used by many cultures in North and Central America, the Middle East and New Zealand in the fabrication of everything from tapestries to sandals.

Instead of appropriating Native American patterns and motifs, I'm interested in exploring more abstract, free-form and universal designs. Once you start to create pattern using a grid, it often ends up referencing other design in ways you hadn't anticipated.



*First model.*

### Materials:

Davey Board (.098)

Cover paper

*Choose a cover material that is rigid and durable enough to weave around, yet flexible enough for working your turn-ins. The flax paper from University of Iowa Center for the Book or Bridget O'Malley's heavyweight flax paper is ideal.*

Decorative endpapers, if desired

Paper to line closure flap

Text block paper

*Fat gatherings are easier to work with, but not necessary. Rives Lightweight was used for all the samples shown.*

Waxed linen thread - two contrasting colors of the same ply count

PVA or PVA/paste mixture

Two (2) needles

Scrap chipboard for punching template

## Preparing Materials:

1. Fold gatherings and put under light weight overnight. Resist the urge to trim the foregdes of the gatherings, as fat sections make for an unattractive stair-step on the text block of the finished book. Hooked endpapers handle the pull of the covers in the finished structure better.

2. Cut cover boards and flap piece to the exact height of the gatherings. Make cover boards just *slightly* wider – no more and 1/16 of an inch – than the folded gatherings. Note that the weaving creates a natural round in the spine, pulling the gatherings away from the foreedge. Cut flap piece to 1/2 to 1/3 the width of the cover boards.

*NOTE: Handmade flax sheets don't have much of a discernable grain. If the papers making up the final paste downs, whether they be simply the first and last pages of the text block or decorative sheets, have a strong pull, you may want to line the other side of your boards with a similar paper.*

3. Cut the cover paper 1 inch taller than the cover boards and to a width equal to that of the two cover boards, plus the thickness of the text block, plus 2 inches.



Braided binding model using rawhide

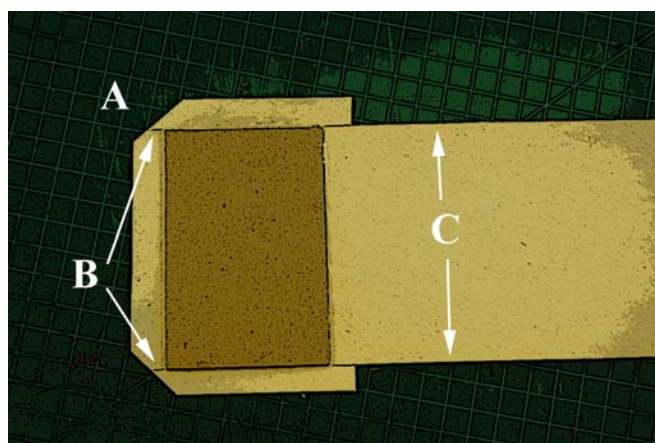
## Creating the Warps

4. Using straight PVA or PVA/paste mixture, attach one of the boards to the paper, positioned 1/2 inch from the left side. Be sure that the board remains square to the paper.

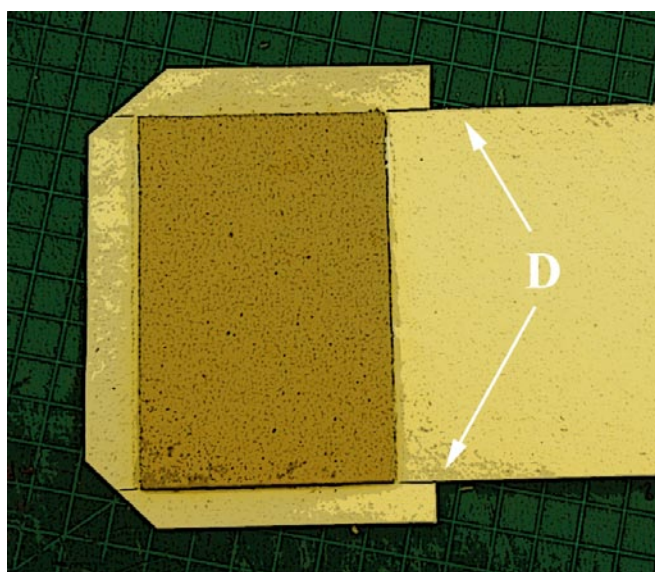
5. Trim off the corners of the cover paper closest to the board at a 45 degree angle, being careful to leave cover paper equal to 1.5 times the board thickness between tip of the board and the cut edge. (A)

6. On the side with the small turn-in flap, use a triangle and utility knife to make a small cut at the top and bottom of the cover paper from the edge of the paper exactly to the corners of the board. (B)

7. Using a large triangle and a utility knife, cut along the top and bottom of the long side of the cover paper, using the top and bottom edge of the boards as your guide. (C)



8. Make a perpendicular cut about 1/2 inch beyond the edge of the board to remove the top and bottom strips. (D)



9. Apply straight PVA or PVA/paste mixture to the top turn-in, bringing the small flaps that extend beyond the board edge around the side of the board and pinch. Trim along the top edge of both sides of the board to remove the extra little flap of cover paper. Repeat on the bottom turn-in.







10. Apply adhesive to the remaining turn-in, use the round end of a bone folder to glove the cover paper along the board edge.

11. Cut a piece of cover paper to fill in the open area slightly larger than needed, trim the turn-ins to make a perfect fit and adhere the piece in place.

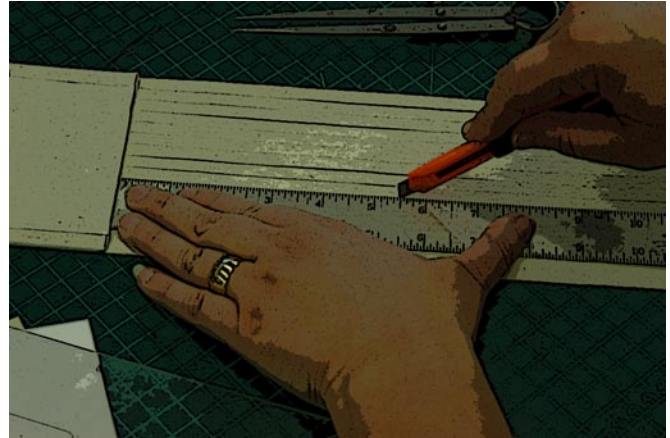


12. A utility knife can be used to pare the edge of the turn-in to reduce bulk if desired. Press the board under light weight.

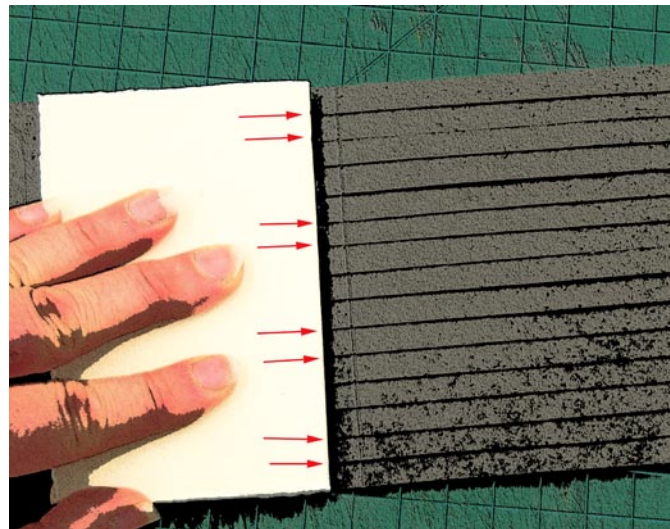
13. Using a triangle, score two vertical lines, one near the board and one near the other side of the paper

15. Using calipers, divide the paper into sections  $\frac{3}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide for the warps, punching tiny guide marks along each of the scored lines.

16. Cut the strips, using the punch marks as your guide. Beginning at the board edge, making several light passes with a sharp utility knife, taking care to minimize drifting.



17. Use the cut strips as a guide to create a punching template for the gatherings with an even number of sewing stations. *Important: Make sewing stations in pairs, with each pair being only one warp-width apart.* Punch the gatherings using the template.



18. To aid in the design of your pattern, place a medium weight on the foredge of the text block stack and measure the distance from the sewing station of one gathering to the next. Tightly coil your sewing thread around a ruler to gauge how many rows should be woven between each gathering. Note: 3 ply waxed linen thread yields approximately 8-9 rows of weaving per quarter inch of warp.

## Twining

In the most widely known form of traditional weaving, threads are passed alternately over and under warps (the supports that run lengthwise in a weaving). In contrast, *twining* employs two or more elements (threads, cloth strips, etc.) that twist around each other between the warps. Twining is a finger-weaving technique that is



sometimes considered more primitive than other weaving because it pre-dates the loom and is difficult to mechanize. The finished work is also considered more stable. A technique called “full turn” twining uses two or more different colored threads to create patterns.

By incorporating a full turn between two warps, one color will appear on the surface and the other color will appear on the reverse side. The color scheme can be altered at any point by inserting a regular half-turn to reverse the color order.

The binding employs one set of two contrasting strands that travel in and out of the sewing stations as the gatherings are added. This technique also differs from basket work in that instead of working around a basket continually, the weaving direction will be changed at the head and tail of the book with each added row.

If working with a complicated design, map it out digitally or on graph paper so that there's a pattern to follow as you work and twine a few practice rows to see how tightly your thread will compact.

The basic twining method is as follows. *NOTE: this illustration shows several rows already worked.* The directions for beginning the first row follow.

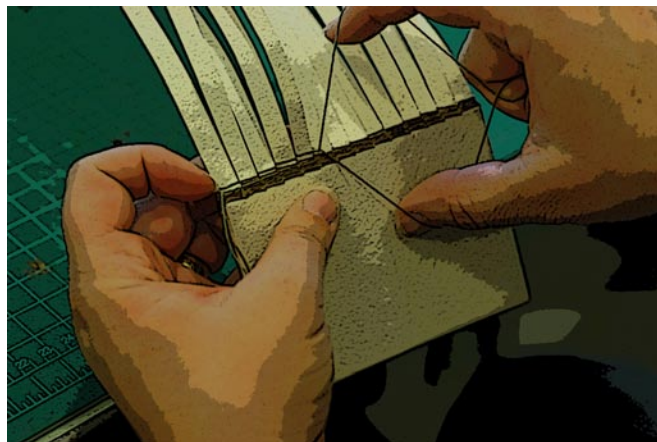
1. Hold the book firmly with your left hand and separate the two threads, keeping the tension comfortably taut with your right hand. (Reverse instructions if you are left handed).



2. Keeping the tension even, twist the two threads in a counter-clockwise motion. This “half turn”, will result in a different color showing on the front than on the previous stitch.



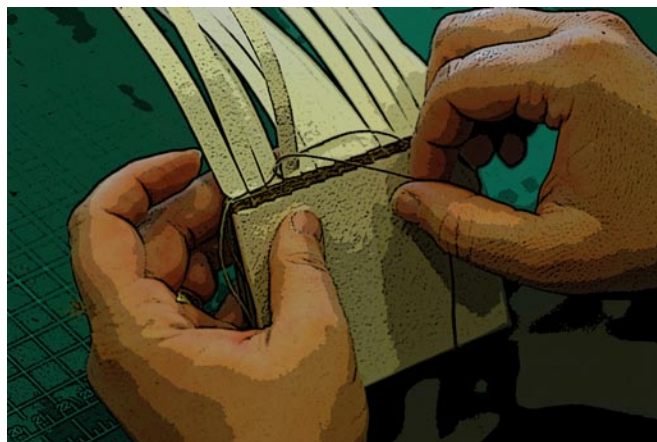
3. To maintain the same color, twist the two threads again in a counter-clockwise motion, creating a “full turn”.



4. After the half or full turn, use your thumb to bring the warp forward through the thread loop.

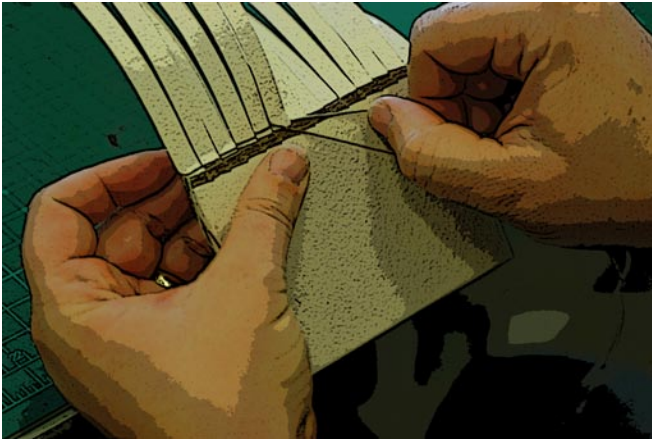


5. Regain the tension on the thread. The thread that is not showing on the front will pull the twist to the back, leaving only the surface color showing.





6. Repeat the step for the next warp.



7. As you add each row of stitches, compact each row tightly so that no warp shows between the threads.



After some practice, it is easy to feel when a stitch pops into the correct place so that only the color desired shows on the front of the woven pattern. Refining this technique will make your patterns neat and tidy.

## The Binding

1. Begin with two strands of contrasting color waxed linen that are an arm's length long. Thread a needle on to one end of each strand, passing each needle through the short tail then pulling the tail over the needle to secure the thread with no knot.

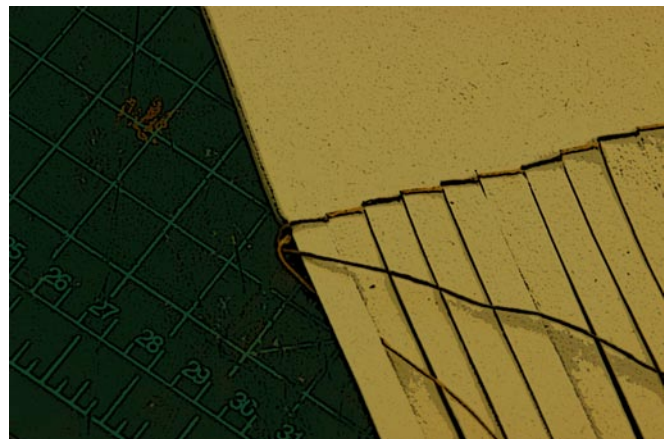
2. Tie the ends of the contrasting threads together, leaving tails at least an inch and a half long.

3. Loop one thread around the first warp near the board edge and begin twining so that the tails of the threads are positioned between the first and second warp on the inside of the spine edge (The side where you can see the small edge of exposed Davey board). These thread ends will be hidden beneath finished twining after the binding is completed. To keep these loose ends out of your way as you work, you may want to tape them temporarily to the inside board with a small piece of painter's tape.

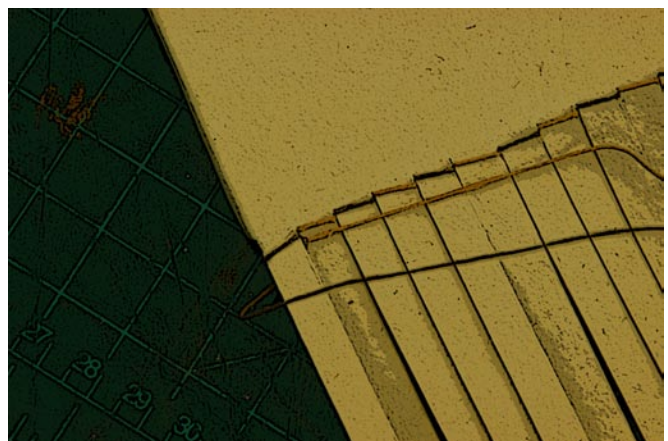
4. Begin twining by bringing one color to the front, twisting once between each warp to change color, twice to maintain the same color.



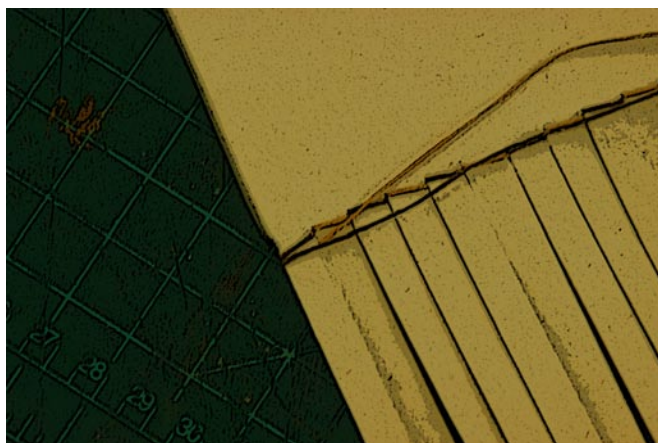
5. To change direction at the end of a row, make one twist of the threads off the end of the last warp, bringing the top thread back over the top of the warp and the contrasting thread underneath the warp as the board is turned around 180 degrees.



6. Pull the bottom thread until the top thread loop is between the first and second warp. Start to twine again with the second warp.



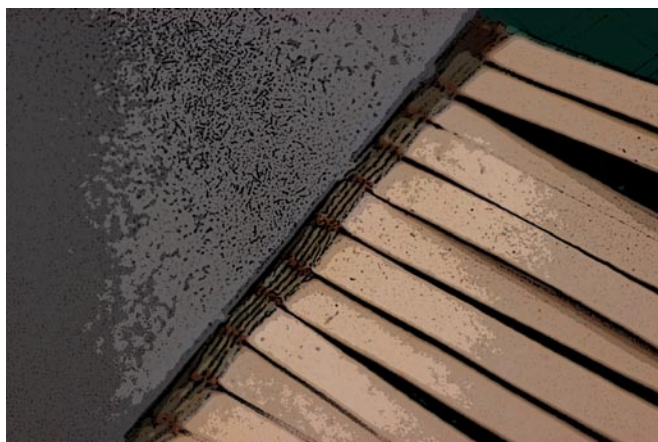




7. This second row will be twined with the warps pointing down instead of up, like you did in the first row. Odd number rows will be twined with warps pointing up, even numbered rows will be twined with warps pointing down, so you're always working toward the right (or left, if left handed). You'll notice that when the warps are pointing down as you twine it feels a bit different and less of a twist is needed for each stitch. Just keep track of your pattern as you go.

8. Add four more rows (six total) before adding your first gathering.

*NOTE: The back side of the twining, when done properly, will have a pattern that that mimics that on the front with the colors reversed. On stretches of full-turn twining, there will be short threads of the running along the line between the warps.*



9. When you're ready to add the first gathering, twine down to the first sewing station. Enter the sewing station with the thread that would have normally gone to the back of the warp and exit at the next station, between the warps. Continue twining down to the next pair of sewing stations and repeat.

13. When the first gathering has been added, use a bone folder to compress the folded section, helping the gutter to absorb some of the thread thickness.

14. Continue to add gatherings and twining rows as needed. Depending on the gauge of your thread and the thickness of your

gatherings, you will have a number of rows of twining between the addition of each gathering - four rows in most of my models.

Use an awl to compact the stitching after each row is added. End with the same number of rows of twining that you started with. Tie off ends leaving a tail long enough to attach a needle then thread the strands under the text block, snipping off at the other side.



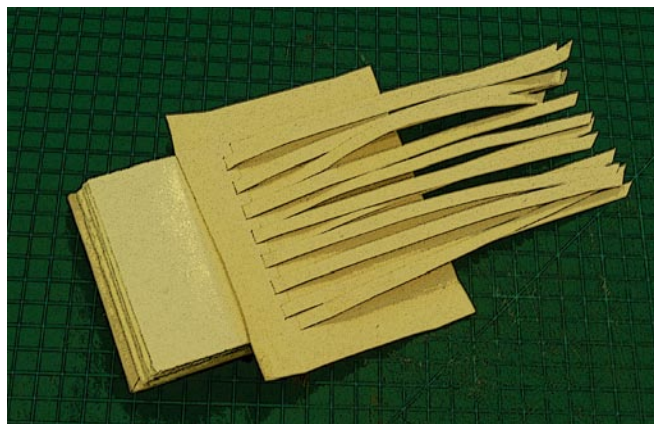
*NOTE: When thread gets short, add more using a weaver's knot, being sure it is hidden on the back side of the weaving and leaving the ends at least an inch long. The ends of the knot can then be hidden by passing them under the stitches and snipping off the remaining tail.*

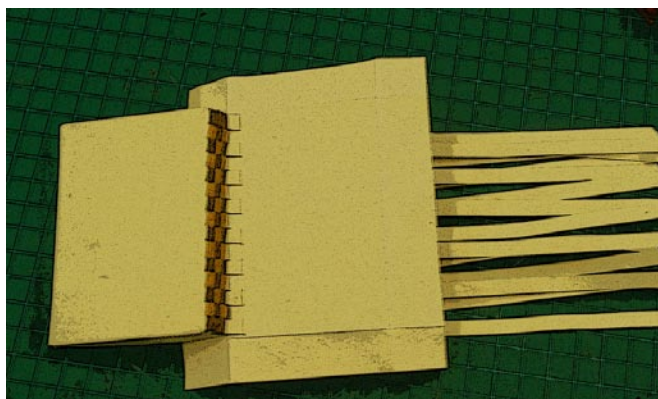
## Adding the Back Cover

1. Cut a piece of cover paper 2 inches taller and wider than your cover boards. Place the remaining cover board in the center and use the round end of the bone folder to firmly fold the flaps up around the board. These lines will provide a template for cutting the slits that the sewing supports will be threaded through.

2. Design a staggered attachment pattern for the sewing supports/warps and score the vertical lines lightly on the back of the cover paper. Use the spring dividers at their original setting to mark the slit guides. If a flap closure is being added, the sewing supports/warps should exit from staggered slits near the foreedge.

3. Slightly trim the ends of the warps at an angle and weave the sewing supports/warps through the cover paper, pulling the paper as close as possible to the spine edge.

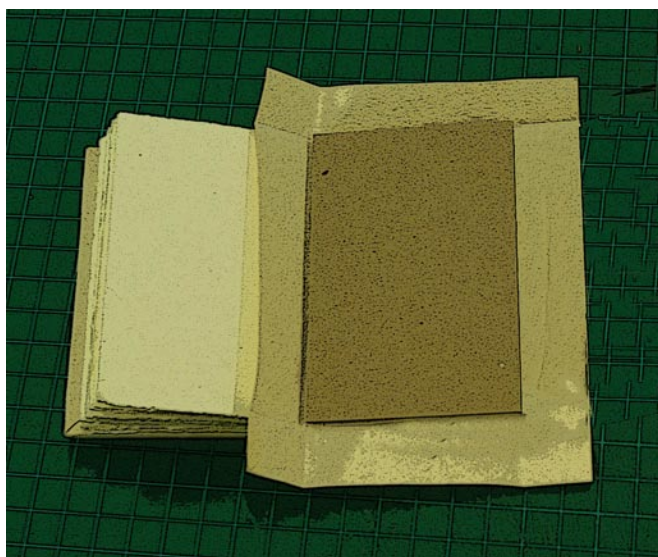




Use a utility knife to pare the ends of the strips and adhere them down to the cover paper with PVA

4. Apply a light coating of PVA to a piece of thin Japanese tissue the size of the cover board and lightly burnish it onto the inside of the cover paper and warps. This lining will prevent adhesive from seeping through the weaving slits when adhering the paper to the board.

5. Adhere the board into place and burnish down well.



6. Trim the corners of the cover paper and paste down the turn-ins. The corners at the spine edge will take a bit of finesse. Trim and fill the back side of the board.

7. Using waste paper to protect the text block, apply adhesive to each endsheet and paste down shut. Leave the book under light weight overnight.

## Variations

Flap closures allow another opportunity to add more weaving to the structure. For the books in the gallery shots, the warps were cut long enough to go in and out of the back cover and continue into the flap.

The front cover and back covers can be reversed, separate paper strips may be woven into the cover paper of the initial board to

create matching paper weaving designs, closure flaps can employ magnets or clasps.

Additionally, warps can be attached in various ways. For the book with the vellum covers I threaded separate warps through the edges of non-adhesive papercase style covers. Warps could be sewn on, laced through boards, or attached in a variety of ways.

Through the use of scale, materials, twining patterns, board attachments, varied warp widths and configurations, closure options and embellishments this structure can be the basis of endless variety.

## References and Resources

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*Sandals of The Anasazi*, <<http://www.umnh.utah.edu/pageview.aspx?id=15891>>

*The Oregon History Project*, created by the Oregon Historical Society. <[http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/historical\\_records/dspDocument.cfm?doc\\_ID=A3271FA8-AD29-0443-4A5F3E85F24F2BFE](http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/historical_records/dspDocument.cfm?doc_ID=A3271FA8-AD29-0443-4A5F3E85F24F2BFE)>

*Columbia River Basketry: Gift of the Ancestors, Gift of the Earth* (University of Washington Press, 1994) by Mary Dodds Schlick. ISBN-10 0295972890 / ISBN-13 978-0295972893

*The Beginnings of Tapestry Weaving*  
Presented by Dr. Elizabeth Wayland Barber  
Second Annual GFR Lecture  
March 11, 2000, UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, California  
<[http://tapestrycenter.org/resources\\_lectures.php?page=showcomments&id=17](http://tapestrycenter.org/resources_lectures.php?page=showcomments&id=17)>

*Bookbinding and the Conservation of Books: A Dictionary of Descriptive Terminology*. Matt T. Roberts and Don Etherington  
<<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/don/don.html>>

Waxed Linen Thread. Royalwood Ltd. <<http://www.royalwoodltd.com>>

Heavyweight Flax paper. Cave Paper. <<http://www.cavepaper.com>>

PC4 Flax Paper Case paper. UICB Paper Research and Production Facility. <<http://www.uiowa.edu/~ctrbook/store/handmadepaper.shtml>>, <[handmade-paper@uiowa.edu](mailto:handmade-paper@uiowa.edu)>

Joey Lavadour. <<http://www.washington.edu/burkemuseum/baskets/artists/plateau.html>>, <[http://www.pdxcontemporaryart.com/main/shows/jolavadour\\_august06.html](http://www.pdxcontemporaryart.com/main/shows/jolavadour_august06.html)>

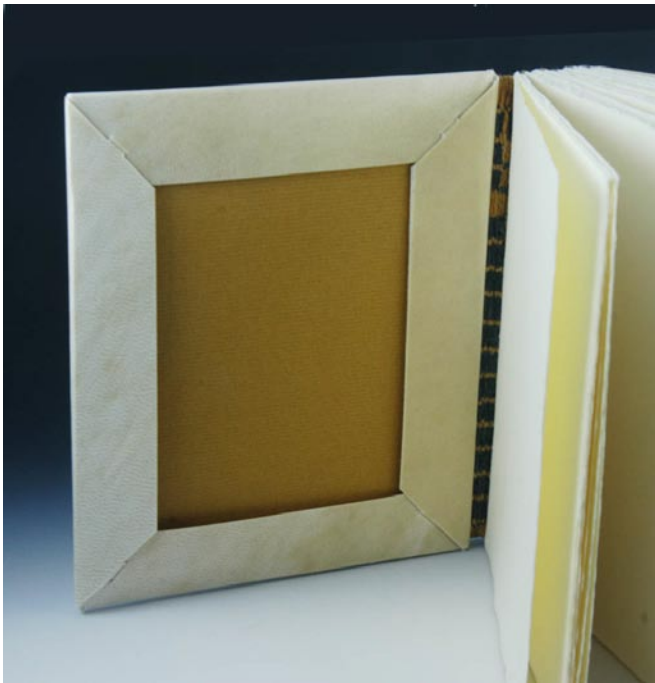


Gallery Images of Twined Bindings

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Roberta Lavadour lives and works in the foothills of the Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon. She publishes her artist's books under the Mission Creek Press imprint and her blank books and other commercial work under the name Desultory Press. She currently splits her time between studio work and serving as the Executive Director of the Pendleton Center for the Arts, a community based non-profit arts organization. Her work can be viewed at <http://www.missioncreekpress.com>. She can be reached at [paper@oregontrail.net](mailto:paper@oregontrail.net).



## Variation on the Split Board Binding

By Don Rash

In late 2007 I was asked to do a presentation binding for a copy of a book dealing with a long-held family heirloom. The requirements of full title and author stamped on the front board as well as an inset photograph led me to utilize a split-board technique that I had used previously. This method allowed me to detach the outer covering elements, title and tool as needed, then reattach to the inner boards and the textblock.

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The endsheets were each comprised of a folio of handmade paper with a single marbled leaf tipped around the fold, a leather hinge adhered around both, and a waste sheet (Fig. 1).



The textblock was trimmed before sewing, sewn on four flat cords, and the slips frayed out. The book was glued up, rounded, backed, and lined with machine-made Okawara between the sewing supports. The head was colored with acrylics and then tooled with gold foil (Fig. 2).

The board makeup was an inner board of .060" binder's board and an outer board laminate of one piece of .060" binder's board and one piece of 2-ply museum board; the combined thickness equaled the depth of the shoulders. A 2-ply joint spacer was cut and adhered to the spine edge of each inner board, then the inner boards were attached to the textblock via the frayed out slips (See fig. 3 at top of next column).



At this point the endbands were sewn over triangular cores (Fig. 4).

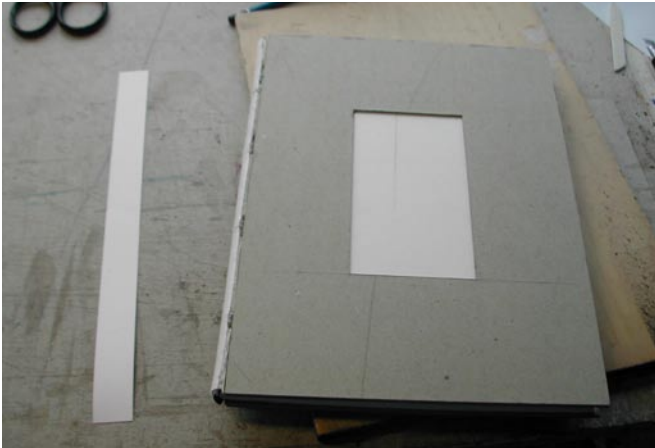


After cutting a window in the outer front board, both outer boards were laminated to the 2-ply boards and allowed to dry under weight (Fig. 5).

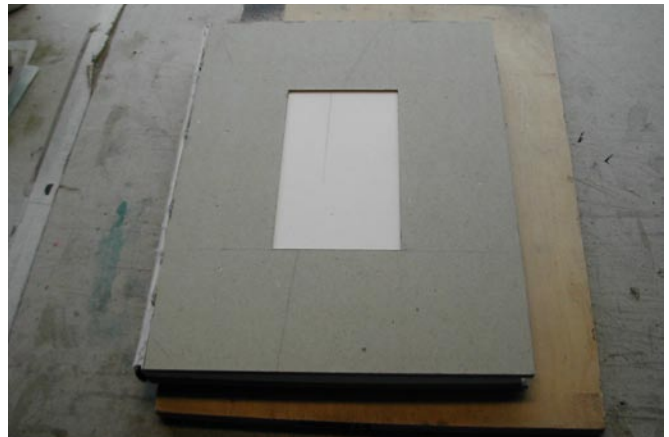
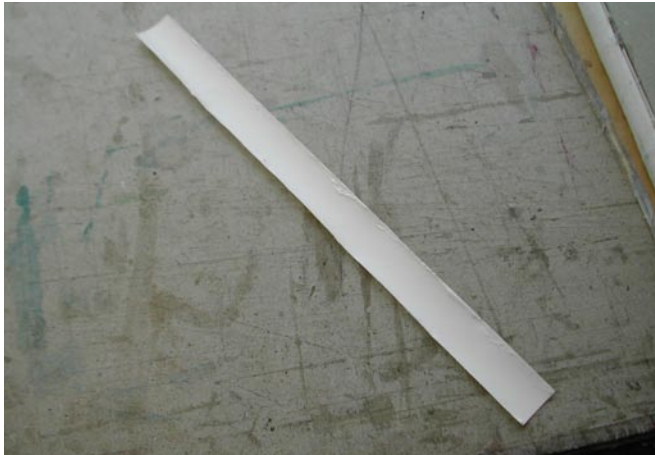


When the outer boards were dry they were attached to the inner boards with dots of PVA (Fig. 6) and allowed to dry under light weight (See fig. 7 at top of next page).



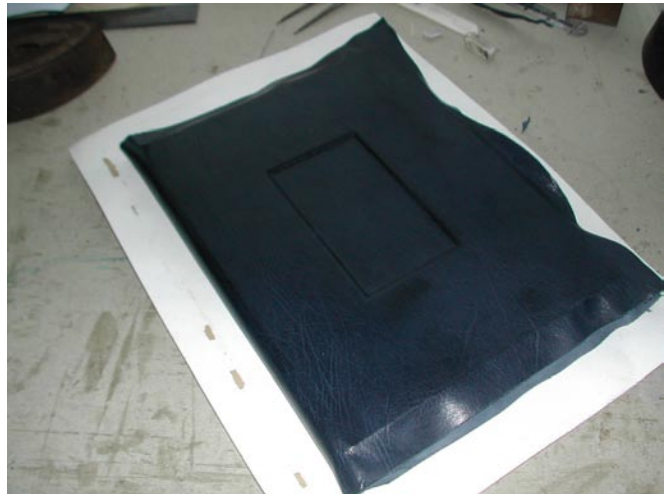


An Okawara tube was made and adhered to the spine, and a spine stiffener of Stonehenge paper was cut to the width of the spine and height of the boards. (Fig. 8).



The spine stiffener was pared along both long edges and then tipped along the same edges to the textblock shoulders (Figs. 9 – 11).

The outside of the stiffener was dampened so that it molded itself to the shape of the spine. The boards were back-cornered and the textblock capped up prior to covering. The outsides of the boards were lined with a layer of handmade paper to balance later inner linings.



The covering leather was navy blue Harmatan goat. The turnins were step-pared with the Scharffix, and the caps, joints and corners pared by hand. The spine area of the leather was pasted up and then adhered to the spine of the book. After the spine was dry, the boards were glued out with hot glue, the leather worked down and into the front inset (Fig. 12) and allowed to dry between blotters and a light weight.





After the sides were dry I carefully delaminated the boards and the edges of the spine stiffener (Fig 13), in effect giving a flat “case”



(Figs. 14 – 15) which could then be titled in the stamping press. After paste-washing the cover, the Kensol was set up for stamping the front board.



Figure 16 shows the stamping jig aligned to the sub-base.



Figure 17 shows the first two words being stamped. A different jig was used to stamp the spine.

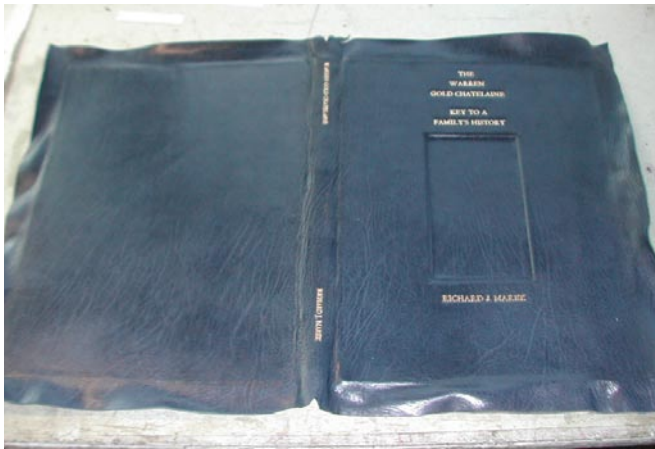
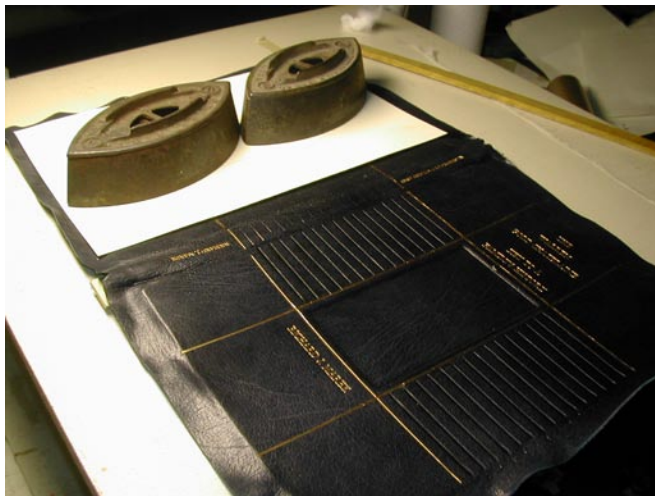


Figure 18 shows the cover after stamping.



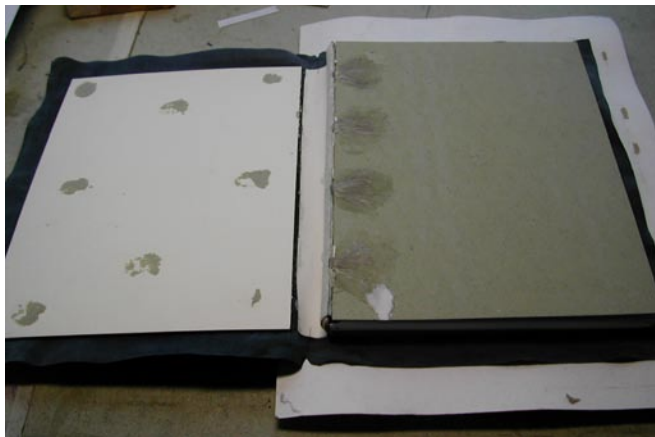
The cover was then wrapped around the textblock and given a little time to settle (Figs. 20 – 21) before reattaching it.



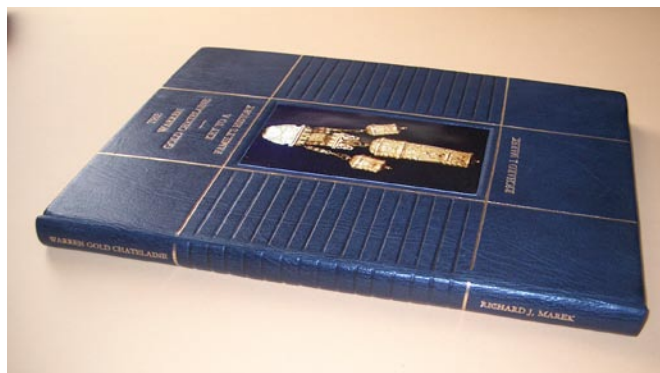
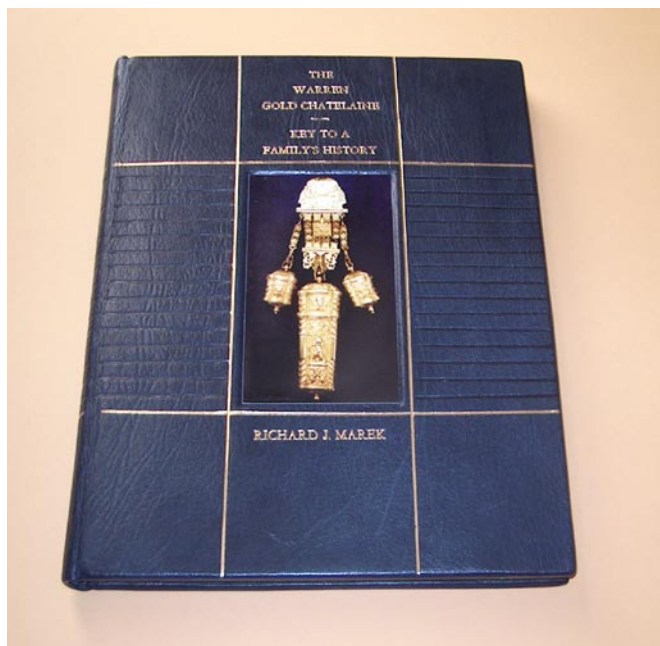
As per the original design the cover was tooled in blind and with gold foil (Fig 19).



This was done starting again at the spine; the spine stiffener was adhered to the tube with PVA. The tube was slit at head and tail to accommodate the turnins. The outer face of each inner board was then glued up with hot glue (Fig. 22), the outer board carefully lowered and aligned to the edges of the inner board. After drying between blotters in a press the head and tail turnins and caps were done as usual, then the joints damped and the boards flexed open. The foreedge turnin and inner joint were done for each board, the boards infilled and the pastedowns were trimmed and adhered.







Finally, the photograph was trimmed and adhered into the recess in the front board. Figures 23 - 26 show the final result.

*Don Rash studied with Trudi and Fritz Eberhardt. He supervised the Bindery at the Haverford College library for eight years, after which he began working as an independent binder. His studio is currently located in Northeastern Pennsylvania, where he executes a wide range of work, including design binding, edition binding, book conservation and restoration, boxmaking and calligraphy. His work has been shown nationally and internationally. In 2004 he established the Boss Dog Press. He has been a member of the editorial board of the Bonefolder since its inception. He can be found online with his studio, the School for Formal Bookbinding, and the Bossdog Press at <http://www.donrashfinebookbiinder.com>.*



## Board Book Adhesive Binding

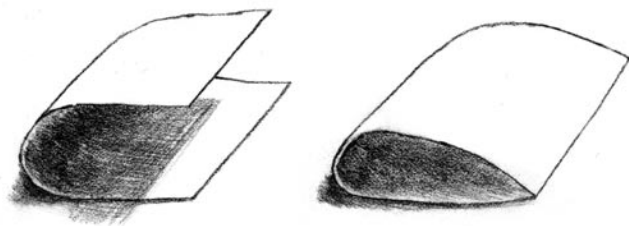
By Leigh Craven

This binding structure is ideal for books with imagery that fills a full spread, i.e. both sides of the folio. The structure allows the book to open fully and pages to lay flat. In addition, there are no threads that run through the spine that might interfere with imagery. Many children's books use the same structure, albeit with much thicker pages, hence the term "board book." It is especially with these thicker pages that the structure shows its benefits as it allows stiff pages to lay flat. There are also strong structural similarities with the "drum-leaf" binding developed by Timothy Ely and described in *The Bonefolder*, Volume 1, No. 1, Fall 2004, <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder/vol1no1contents.htm>>.



*Image of children's board book*

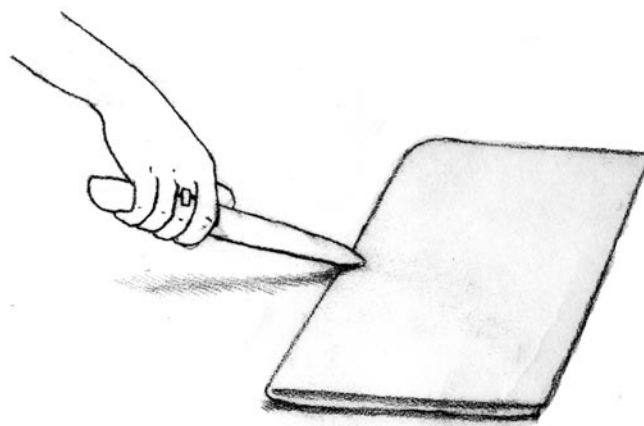
### Preparing Your Book block



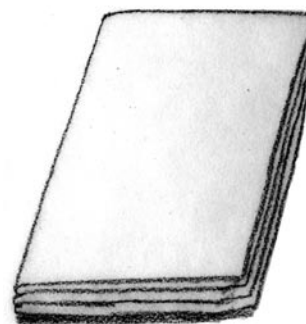
*Grain direction: Image at left shows grain perpendicular to fold, image at right shows grain parallel to fold.*

Step 1: Once all pages are printed you may cut or tear them to size. Don't forget about your endsheets!

*My personal preference is for all sides to be cut, except for the bottom edge, which I tear to create the look of a decal edge.*

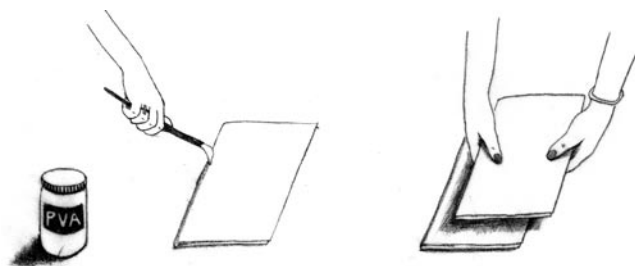


Step 2: Using your bone folder, carefully fold each page in half. Make sure the crease is crisp! If you need to trim again, trim each page already folded.



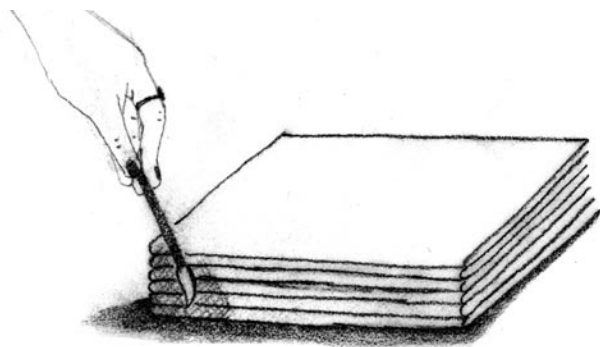
Step 3: Once all pages are folded stack them in order, edge to edge to begin forming your bookblock. Your endsheets should be sandwiching your pages. Make sure that your page edges line up at this time.

*If you are creating an edition, you will want to do this for the creation of all of book blocks at this time. Double-check your orientation for each signature.*



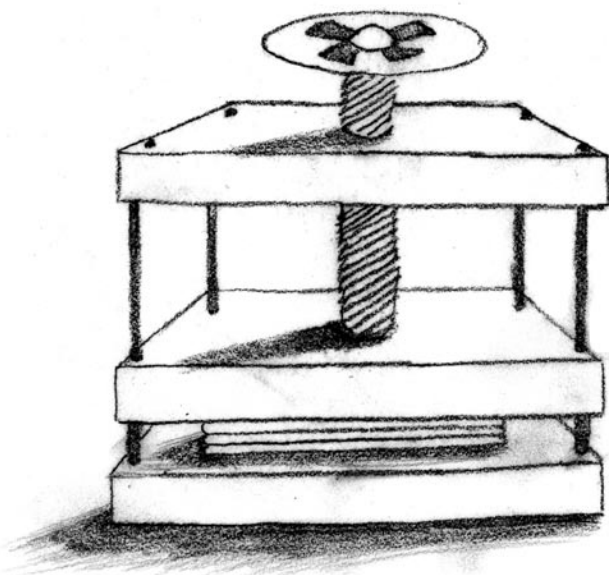
Step 4: Now that all of your signatures (and book blocks) are identical you are ready for gluing. Using your PVA (such as Jade 403) you need to "tip" each page together along the spine, careful to line them up perfectly. To "tip" the pages together begin by running a narrow bead of glue along the length of the spine edge of your first page (this would be your endsheet) then press your next page to it, also rubbing with the bonefolder to adhere the two. Once attached you will "tip" the next page on, slowly and carefully adhering your

signatures to build up your block. Be sure to run your bone folder over the edge with pressure each time. Also, make sure that you keep your page orientations correct as you go! You will need to repeat this process for every book.



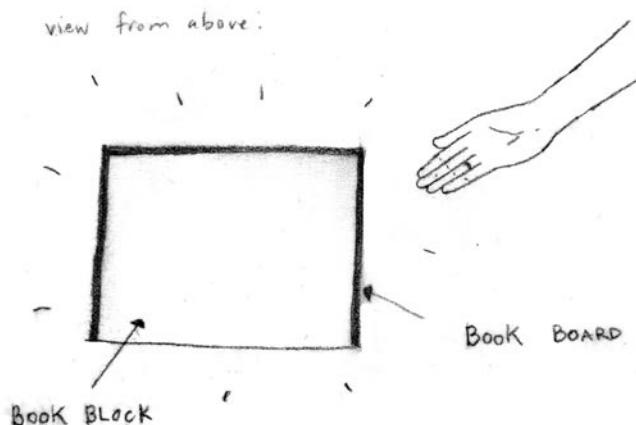
Step 5: Now that your pages are tipped together you will want to ensure that the binding is cohesive. This is done by brushing PVA along the entire spine making sure it gets into the small crevices created by the signatures.

*Once spine edge is well glued, run your bone folder along the edge to remove excess glue and smooth the spine.*

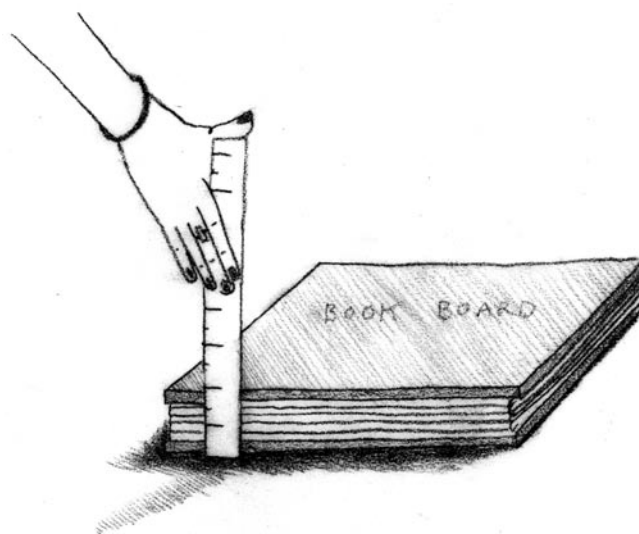


Step 6: Now place your freshly glued book block in the press while the glue dries, in order to ensure a compact fit of your signatures.

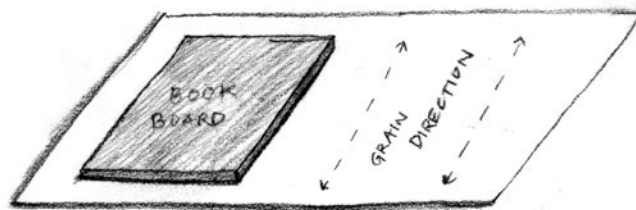
## Making your Case



Step 7: Once dry you may use your book block to determine the size of your boards. You will want to cut two identical boards with 90-degree angles. The boards will abut the spine edge and extend past your other three edges by approx.  $1/8"$ . It is important that this is visually satisfying, so you may adjust this measurement depending on the scale of your book.



Step 8: Next, stack your book block in between your two freshly cut boards, making sure that the edges of the boards and spine are flush to each other. Gently press down with your hand and measure the width of the boards and book block.

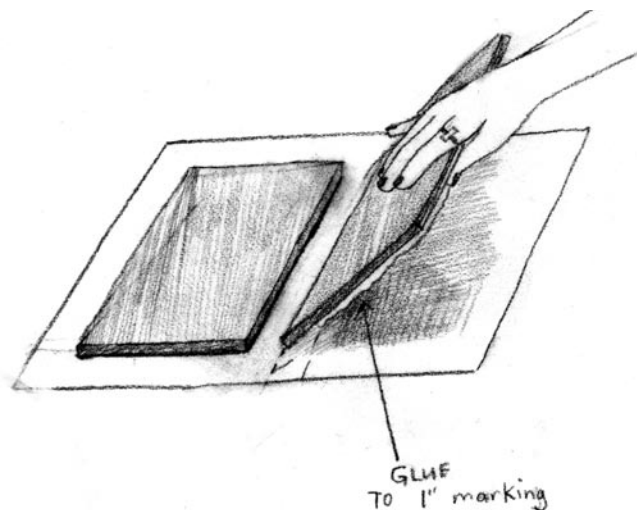


Step 9: Now that your two boards are cut it is time to attach them, completing your case. You will want to do this with a smooth, heavy weight paper, such as Rives BFK. The first step will be to cover one side of one sheet of book board in glue. Be careful to line



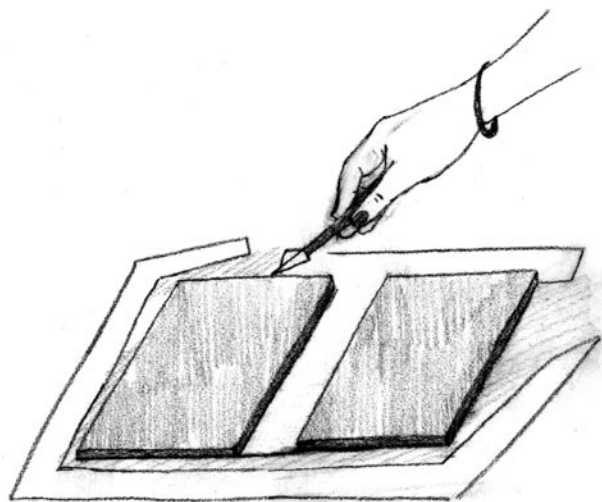
up the board's spine edge with the line marking the thickness of your spine. The spine edge of your board should run parallel to the grain direction of your paper. Firmly press board into place.

From the spine edge of the glued board measure the distance found in Step 8 and mark onto your paper.



On your next pre-cut book board, measure 1" in from the spine edge and draw a line parallel to the spine marking this distance.

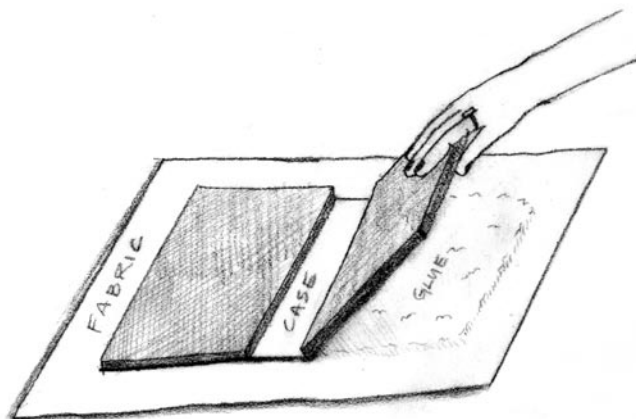
Glue this side of the board from the measured line to the outer edge of the board, leaving 1" inch along the spine edge unglued. Place (glue-side down) onto your paper; be careful to line up your spine edge with the line on your paper marking the width of your book.



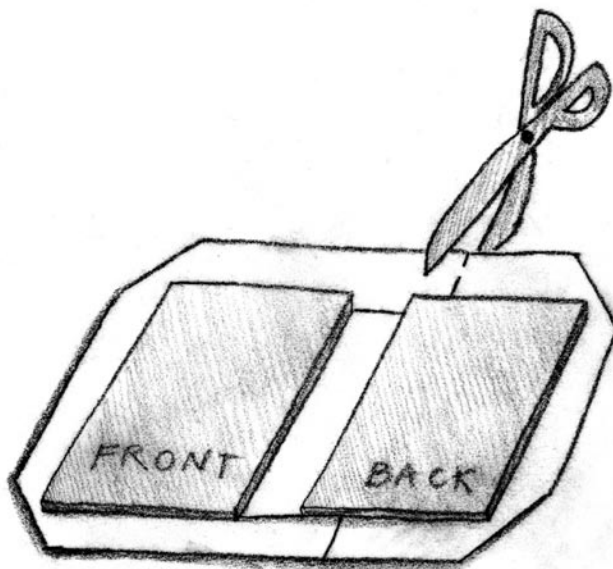
Step 10: Now that both boards are in place, flip your structure over and smooth out with your bone folder, ensuring there are no air bubbles. Now that your boards are firmly placed, you may trim the extra paper off of your case.

*Once trimmed you may carefully bend/crease your structure along the spine edges and spine drop to fit your structure.*

## Covering your Case

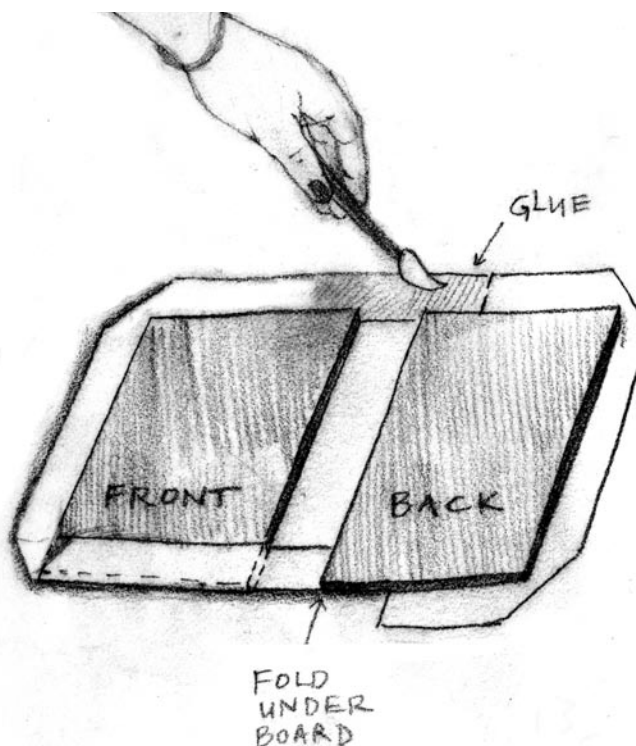


Step 1: Lay out your case. Cut your fabric so that it extends a minimum of 1" past the all sides of the case. Beginning with the side that doesn't have the drop spine, Brush PVA onto half your case. Once glued, set it in place onto your fabric. Then carefully flip over your case (with fabric) and smooth with the bone folder to ensure the removal of any air bubbles and a good adhesion. Be careful not to get PVA onto your book cloth!

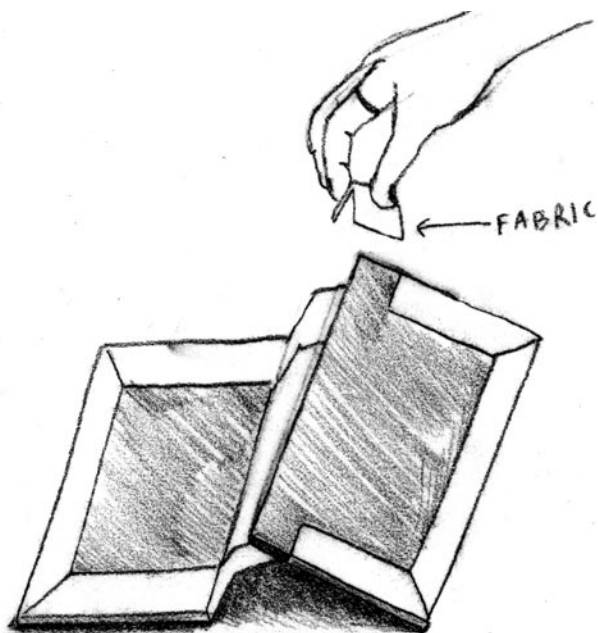


Step 2: Flip your case back over (fabric side down) and carefully cut the book cloth at the corners to make 45 degree angles, leaving the measurement of 2 book board widths as the distance between the book board and edge of cloth. In addition, you will need to make two additional cuts into the cloth that continue the line of your drop spine. These cuts will allow you to fold your fabric underneath the drop spine board as a means of keeping the case movement flexible.

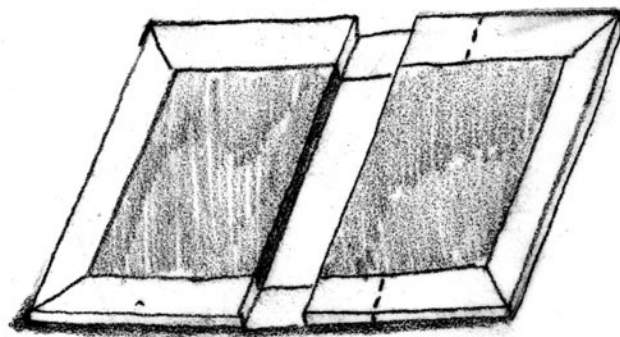
## Casing In



Begin by brushing PVA onto the fabric of one of your longer sides of the case (which is divided into two sections). Fold the cloth over the front side of the board and spine, and underneath the 1" section of the backboard along the spine. Fold the remaining cloth over the backboard. Repeat on opposite side. Carefully glue and wrap vertical edges on both the front and back boards. Trim corners if necessary to ensure tight, clean corners.

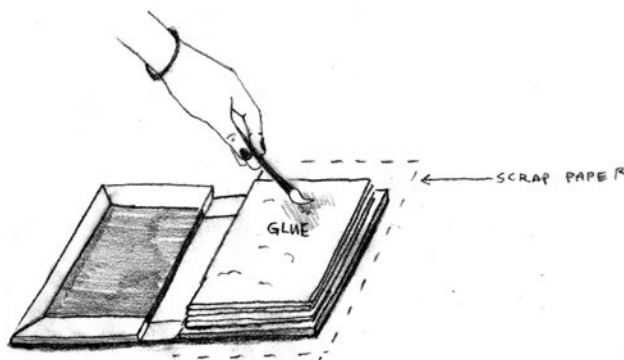


Step 3: Now you will want to cut a small piece of book cloth that will perfectly fit into the opening left by the drop spine. Make sure that you do NOT overlap your book cloth, but abut it to what is already wrapped around the case. This will give you a cleaner, more refined look.

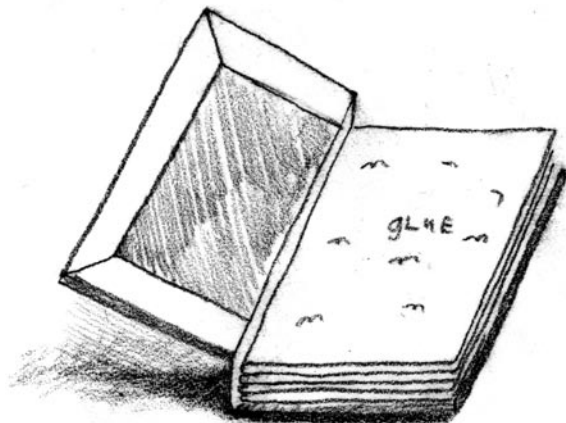


Now that your cover is complete it is time to case in your book!!! Just a little bit longer and you will be all done! Remember, the "drop spine" should always be at the back.

Step 1: Spread out your beautifully covered case flat onto the table. Place your book block onto the back side of the case so that it abuts the spine and runs parallel with the inner edge of your back board; and so that there appears to be a visually equal distance between the top, bottom, and outer edge of the back board. Make sure to double check and coordinate your book block with your case!



Place a sheet of newsprint under your top, folded endsheet so that it hangs over your book block, protecting it from glue. Beginning at the spine edge, evenly glue your endsheet. If your paper expands a lot when glued out, you may want to trim back before gluing out. Experiment.

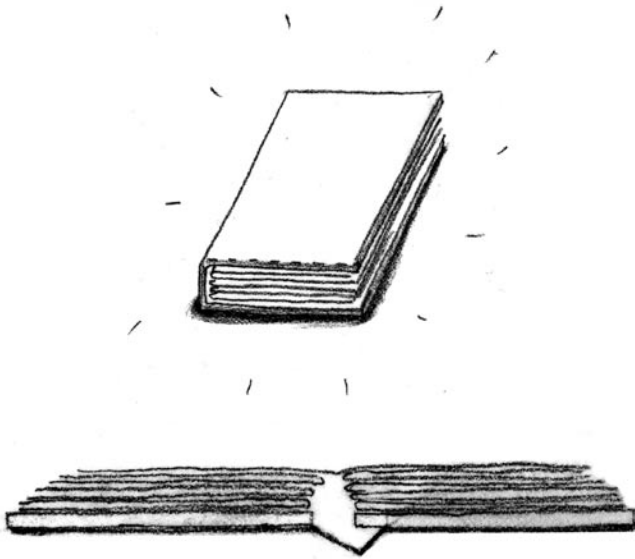




Step 2: Once glued, remove your newsprint. Holding your book block in place, lift up the front book board so that the spine edge and the book block are flush; then carefully press the front of the case to the glued endsheet, pressing down.

*Flip your case so that the front side is against the table; open and smooth the endsheet down with your bone folder, ensuring there are no bubbles.*

Step 3: Repeat last two steps on backside to finish!  
Congratulations, you have just cased in your book! It looks great!



Leigh Craven has a BFA in printmaking from Cornell University and a MFA in printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design, and studies bookbinding with Peter Verheyen. She has taught at LeMoyne College in Syracuse, New York, is currently teaching in the Department of Art at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts, and has been a visiting professor at various other institutions. Her work has been exhibited widely in group and solo exhibitions earning her numerous honors and awards. She can be reached at <<http://www.bridgew.edu/art/faculty/FullTimeF/CRAVEN/>>. *Examples of the Structure by the Author and Others.*

## Examples of the Structure



*What Is Your Fantasy?* is an adhesive bound “board book” that includes a series of 22 polyester plate lithographs printed on Fabriano Rosapina paper. The structure is covered in Japanese silk with hand printed silkscreen and etching décor. Created in 2006 in an edition of 8.



*26 Words*, an alphabet book by Thorsten Dennerline and Peter Verheyen. The board book structure is covered in full black clamsman goat with onlays of red oasis goat and calf with laserprint; housed in television shaped box with cutout front to reveal decor of binding; box covered in full black goat with wood, wire and acrylic. “Dummy binding” inserted into box to give overall sense of work while book is removed. Bound 2000.

## The Wayzgoose Affair by Jadwiga Jarvis

Reviewed by Carolynne Skinner

*This review was originally published in the Book Arts Newsletter, No. 38 November/December 2007, published by the UWE Bristol, School of Creative Arts, Department of Art and Design. It is reprinted with permission of the author.*



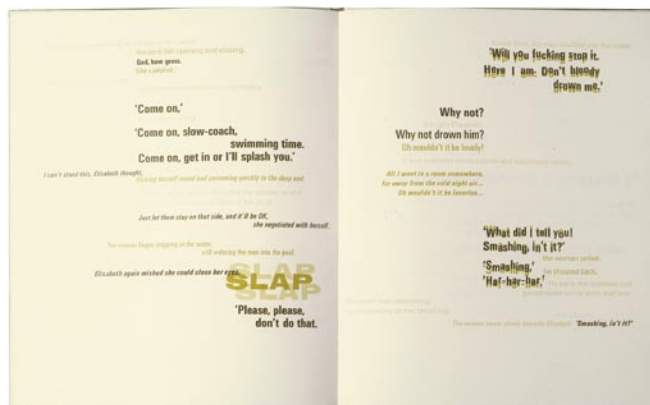
Has there ever been a book like *The Wayzgoose Affair*? I doubt it, or if there will ever be another like it. Until now, books written by small press printers about the practice of book making have been few and slight - largely because most productions from the traditional privatepress fraternity are not much to write home about, particularly concerning their literary, historical or visual significance. Similarly, books written by private press biographers - whether about individual presses or the movement as a whole - have lacked colour, life and typographic spirit. Until the Affair.



*The Wayzgoose Press printshop*

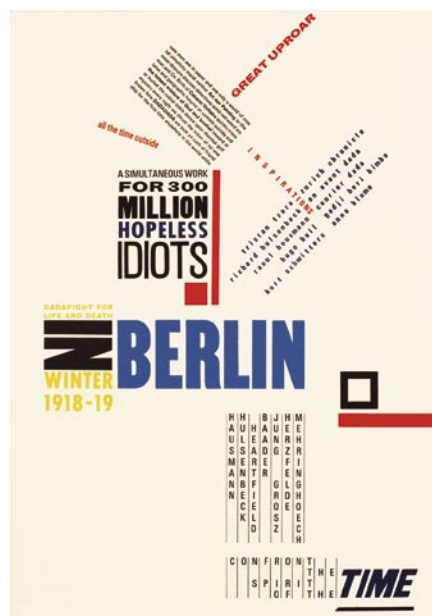
Historically, private printing has been a leisurely pastime, the province of the dilettante in that it has rarely been their sole activity and almost never their only source of income. Establishing the Wayzgoose Press in late 1985, Mike Hudson's and Jadwiga Jarvis's

rationale was to dive straight into production without a life belt. So this copiously illustrated book, with its episodic narrative, details the day-to-day engagement of two bloody-minded individuals who were determined not to sink, although treading water would be necessary from time to time.



*Double spread from The Cure, The Wayzgoose Press, 1992.*

In her Foreword, Jadwiga Jarvis rationalises the purpose and the theme of *The Wayzgoose Affair*: "This book is the record of the joys and frustrations of utilizing the creative potential of a technology which, since its invention 560 years ago, has been put almost exclusively to commercial use. It is a record of an unusual activity which, in spite of being carried out at the wrong time and in the wrong place, has been successfully sustained for two decades."



*Page from Dada Kampfen um Leben und Tod, The Wayzgoose Press, 1996.*

The only book on this subject previously published in Australia was Geoffrey Farmer's *Private Presses and Australia* in 1972 - a slim un-illustrated volume, dealing with bibliographic values, in the form of a checklist, of the few local practitioners from the late nineteenth century until the book's publication. From an unpromising historical precedence the Wayzgoose Press has emerged as an international favourite with individuals and institutions alike.



The text describes various creations of the press interspersed with letters to and from other printers, collectors, artists, poets, librarians, booksellers et al from around the world, whose own experiences serve to deflect the often fraught events occurring in the alternatively freezing or boiling tin shed in the Blue Mountains, only 50 miles west of Sydney.



Double spread from *The Waygoose Affair*

This “biobibliography” of an active and original printing adventure is enjoyable on many levels. There are humorous descriptions of the many exhausting craft skills required to render Hudson’s and Jarvis’s unique interpretation of a contemporary poet’s offering into print - added to which are the taxing and not at all funny dealings with the author, by mail, so as to ensure the correct transition from manuscript to final printing.



Double spread from *The Waygoose Affair*

Weaving the narrative around correspondence with other “bookish” individuals in what is essentially a biography of the press provides an alternative commentary while giving the book a universal appeal and relevance. In her Foreword, Jarvis weighs up the pros and cons of her chosen literary form and concludes that “an event written down as it happened and as it was experienced, when put in context, maintains its currency. Events related solely with the benefit of hindsight run the risk of being nostalgic, over-rationalised or skewed to suit a new reality, in the process losing their original spirit”. *The Waygoose Affair* is an honest exposé of how it happened - no idealisation here.

Hudson and Jarvis - both uncomfortable with being pigeonholed in the private press or book artists category - have consistently produced highly original, creative and technically flawless books

and broadsides for two decades. They use the entirety of a fine printer’s and book artist’s armoury: typography, layout, design, colour, letterpress printing, linocuts, wood engravings, monoprints, collographs, calligraphy, textures, and binding. The choice and mix of their creative tools is tailored to the specific requirements of the text in hand.



Reform broadside, *The Waygoose Press*, 2003.

Jarvis explains in a letter to Richard Brown in 1996: “... Because we are entirely self-contained we have the freedom to indulge in designing our books and their bindings purely from the creative perspective. Frequently in order to be put into practice, the ideas require technical feats of a totally unorthodox nature and we invent/improvise as we go along. This is relatively easy for us since neither has had any formal training in printing and so we are unencumbered by preconceptions of trade traditions.”

This autarkic standpoint has resulted in a pronounced sui generis style. Clearly, each text has been rendered into print from a totally different aesthetic, but each text is equally identifiable as from the Waygoose Press. There are no formulaic solutions to this press’s oeuvre; each interpretation is intended to reflect the author’s individual creative effort.

Not content with the irreverent unorthodoxies of their bookmaking, the partners instituted, or one might say resurrected, a series of regular socio-political graphic/ typographic commentaries under the rubric of the Waygoose Broadside. Freedom from

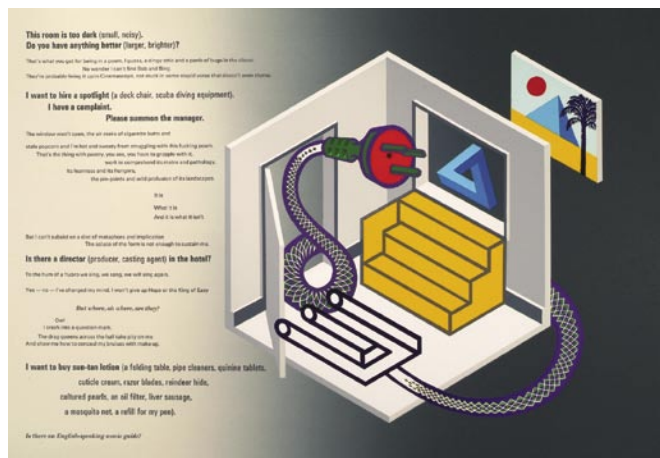
the concerns of due diligence (as when transcribing another's manuscript to print) has produced some classic graphic critiques of modern dilemmas. No holds are barred with Jarvis's text, and Hudson's visual comments take no prisoners.

*The Wayzgoose Affair* is a delight to behold with their handmade, limited edition books and broadsides described and displayed in full colour. The powerful black and red dust jacket, an ink splat resembling an exclamation mark, gives the reader a taste of things to come. Printed using a stochastic screen, the illustrations are sharp and rich in detail. Different typefaces for the narrative and the letters visually enhances the on-going long-distance conversations between the author and her numerous correspondents.

of 500 copies was printed commercially, it has all the hallmarks of a private press visualisation. Conceived and designed entirely "in house" on a PC, in its generous proportions, dramatic layout and idiosyncratic selections it pays homage to the pioneers of the manuscript book, when time and money were emphatically not the desiderata of production.

Carolynne Skinner is an Australian-based publisher and arts promoter.

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Page from Dorothy Lamour's *Life as a Phrase Book*, The Wayzgoose Press, 2006.

Throughout the book are scattered photographs from the pre-computer graphic designer's toolkit (in constant use at the Wayzgoose Press). Pastels, crayons, felt-tip pens, airbrushes, pen nibs, drafting tools, brushes, etc, etc, plus the paraphernalia of book binding, typesetting, wood engraving and the mainstay of cost-effective relief printing: the ubiquitous linocut. These give balance and variety to the page, and, as Jarvis says, "are included here as a historical record".

This is a book which is not just an authentic account of a particular press but is a lasting memorial to all such endeavours that are sadly, in the face of the omnipresent digitalization, running out of practitioners.

The concerns of the craft worker about methods of production have led to memorable artistic consequences, dramatically evident in this elegant production. There is a directness about the imagery that only the hand worker is qualified to make. Today's design is too often at the mercy of overworked sophistry, technical gee-whizzery in the hands of stylists rather than innovators.

*The Wayzgoose Affair* is an admirable compilation of an extraordinary effort, maintained against the odds and for a time span that is all the more remarkable because it straddles the period that has seen the digitised typesetting and printing revolution establish new parameters of design thinking. Although this edition



Censorship broadside, The Wayzgoose Press, 1992.



Cover for *Kompedium* (an annual compilation of private press publications). Printed in 1991 for Stefan Bartkowiak

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Photographs in this article by Mike Hudson of the Wayzgoose Press and Warren Hinder



## Foot, Mirjam. *Bookbinders at Work: their roles and methods.*

A Review by Pamela Barrios

London : British Library ; New Castle, DE : Oak Knoll Press, 2006.

In *Bookbinders at Work*, Mirjam Foot describes and quotes from “primary sources for bookbinding practice that have hitherto not been much explored: descriptions by binders and interested observers of how books were bound.... [she uses] these contemporary witnesses to try and show what binders did, how they did it and why, what their life was like and what their place and significance was in the European book trade in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.”

In her first chapter, she reviews and rejects the bibliographical premise that George Watson Cole espoused in the following quote from 1916: “the only perfect book is the one caught on its way from the printer’s office to the binder’s, or, after it has been folded and gathered with its inserts, before it has been taken in hand by the sewer, before the binder’s shears have shorn it of any of its original material, and before his craft has skillfully concealed the printer’s irregularities”. Her book begins with a history of how later bibliographers agreed with this approach, although she explains that Cole later “relented”. In her trail of prominent bibliographers, including W. W. Greg, R. B. McKerrow and Fredson Bowers, she notes how very few took the time to reexamine this point of view. Her refutation is convincing. “Bindings provide us with information about the book trade, how books were sold and how they were received. Bindings provide evidence for how books were valued and what they meant to people, as well as how they were used...” Bindings also provided evidence of “...the role of the binder in producing the book as something that could be put on sale and the bibliographical significance of the binding over and above its artistic or merely protective function...”

The remaining four chapters use the words of working bookbinders, quoted from contemporary manuals such as C. E. Prediger, Anshelmus Faust and D. De Bray, to provide a glimpse of working practices. Various contemporary images complete the view. Individual illustrations of elegant fine bindings from the period illustrate the high degree of artistry these shops produced.

Although the chapters focus on different aspects: technical aspects, decoration, economics, and personalities of the individual shop keepers, it becomes evident, that all of these areas cross each other through the constant overlap and confusion of the roles of bookseller, publisher and bookbinder.

Ms. Foot’s sources are first-person accounts of specific shops, written by owners or employees. This is a most informative and attractive book that allows the words and illustrations of the work of these contemporary binders to speak for themselves. In the end, their important contribution to, and influence over both individual bindings and the history of the book trade, becomes evident.

Pamela Barrios was introduced to the field of Book Arts and Conservation by Hedi Kyle at the NY Botanical Garden in 1976. She also trained with Elaine Schlefer at the NY Public Library. She held conservation positions at these institutions and at the Sterling Memorial Library at Yale and the NY Academy of Medicine before accepting her current position of Conservator of Special Collections at the L. Tom Perry, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. Her artist books and design bindings have been exhibited internationally. She has been a member of the editorial board of the *Bonefolder* since its inception. She can be reached at <pam\_barrios@byu.edu>.

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*Aboard The Mavis* by Richard Markham  
New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1880

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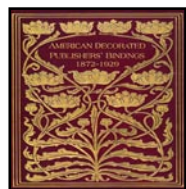
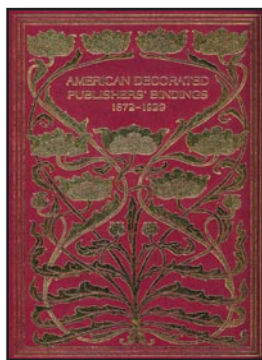
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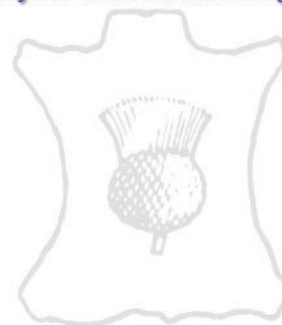
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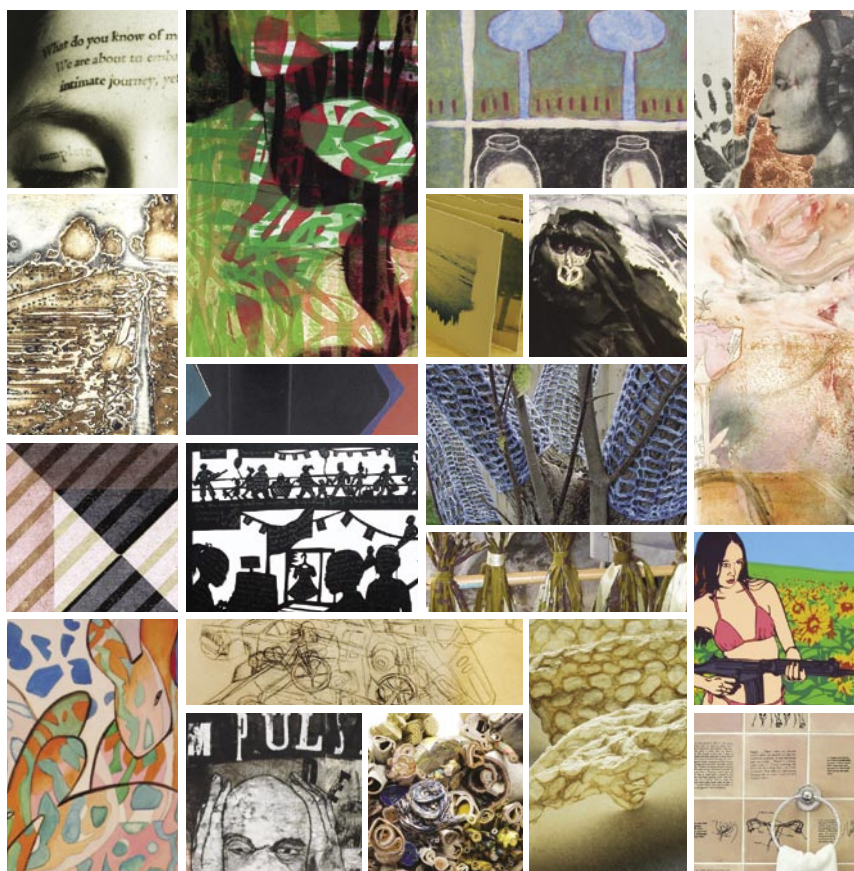
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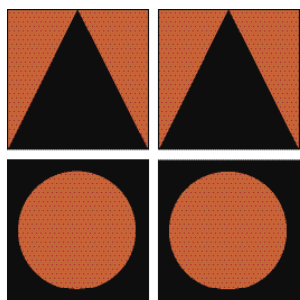
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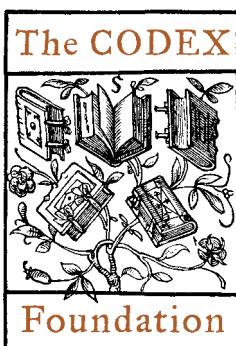
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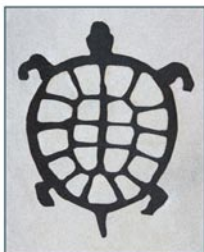
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**THE BOOK OF ORIGINS**  
A Survey of American Fine Binding



**THE BOOK OF ORIGINS:  
A SURVEY OF AMERICAN FINE BINDING**

This traveling exhibition features contemporary fine bindings by ten American binders. The group includes established masters as well as gifted emerging artists. Two works are presented by each binder; their binding in response to the set *Book of Origins* text, and an additional example of their work.

**Full Color Catalog Now Available**

The 32 page, full color catalog was designed by Julia Leonard, designer of the Guild of Book Workers 100th Anniversary Exhibition catalog. It depicts all 20 works, plus descriptions and biographical statements by each binder.

Pre-payment of \$15 plus \$4 per order for priority mail postage is required. Make checks payable to Karen Hanmer.

Send orders to:  
Karen Hanmer  
709 Rosedale Road  
Glenview, IL 60025

Or via PayPal, payment to [karen@karenhanmer.com](mailto:karen@karenhanmer.com)

The entire exhibition and travel schedule is online at  
<http://library.syr.edu/digital/exhibits/b/bookoforigins/>



## Submission Guidelines

The *Bonefolder* welcomes submissions of articles for publication. Articles should relate to the fields of bookbinding, book arts, decorative techniques, education, exhibition reviews, tips & tricks, or book reviews. Articles that have not been published elsewhere will be given first consideration.

The language of the *Bonefolder* is English, though it may be possible to work with authors in the translation of non-English articles.

Because the *Bonefolder* is published electronically we are able to reach a worldwide audience at minimal cost. Issues will be released as PDF files which can be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader.

### Submitting your text:

Only completed articles should be submitted to the editorial review board. This includes proof-reading. Please indicate position of graphics in text by placing the filename of the image in brackets, i.e. [AuthorLastname-Image1.tif].

Articles may be included either as plain text in email letters, or as word processor files attached to email letters. Microsoft Word or WordPerfect are the preferred file formats. Formatting should be very basic with italics, bold, and other formatting used sparingly. Please do not use any "tables." Font should be either Arial or Times Roman. Images can be included in the JPG or TIF formats. Images should be sized to 1024 x 768 pixels if taken with a digital camera. If scanned or created digitally, save at 400 dpi. Line art should be saved as bitonal, b/w images as 8 bit (256 shades of grey), and color as 24 bit. DO NOT embed images in body of text, but save separately and attach. Likewise, collaged images are not allowed.

### Files should be named as follows

The article (if not sent in email message body):

AuthorLastname-ShortTitle.doc

Images:

AuthorLastname-Image1.tif (.jpg)

AuthorLastname-Image2.tif (.jpg)

### References:

\* Any references should be included in ( ) following the text they refer to. If links are included, you must include the full URL, including "http://" enclosed in "<>".

Examples:

Middleton, Bernard C. (1996). A History of English Craft Bookbinding, New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press.

Etherington, Don and Matt Roberts (1982). Bookbinding and the Conservation of Books: A dictionary of descriptive terminology. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office. <<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/don/don.html>>

Files sent through regular postal mail on floppy diskettes or CD are also acceptable, provided they are in the PC format. If sending on disc, please write the editor for a mailing address.

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### Contact:

Email articles to:

The *Bonefolder*, <[bonefolder@philobiblon.com](mailto:bonefolder@philobiblon.com)>



Authors are normally informed of the publication decision within four to five weeks.

Full information on the *Bonefolder* can be found at <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bonefolder>>.

The deadline for the Fall 2008 issue is August 15.



# Bind-O-Rama 2008

The 2008 Bind-O-Rama will feature works exhibiting ANY of the structures described in the past 8 issues of the *Bonefolder*. These include:

*Vol. 1, no. 1: The springback; drum leaf binding*

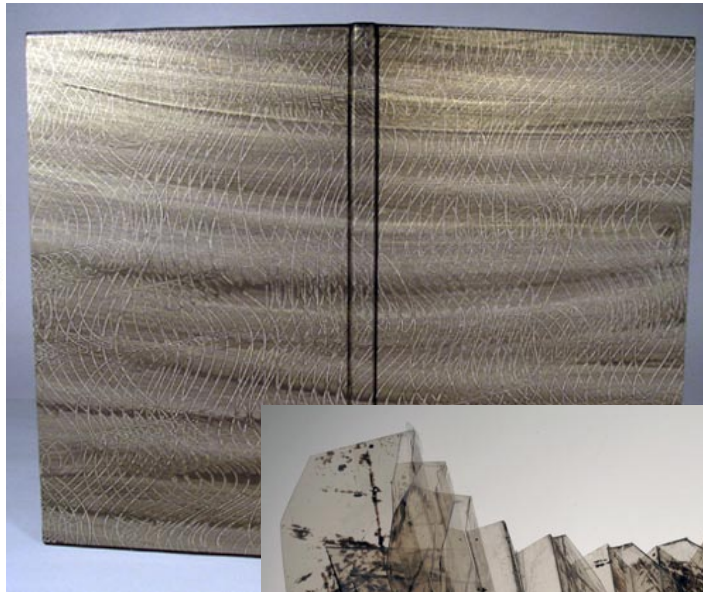
*Vol. 1, no. 2: Tunnel book; edelpappband/millimeter binding*

*Vol. 2, no. 1: Flagbook; molded paper spine*

*Vol. 2, no. 2: Limp vellum binding*

*Vol. 4, no. 2: Twined binding; split board variation; board book adhesive binding*

Full details on entering can be found at <<http://www.philobiblon.com/bindorama08>>  
Digital images of works and descriptions due September 1, 2008.



Examples from past Bind-O-Rama events include clockwise from top: Anna Embree, millimeter binding, Hedi Kyle, flagbook, Charlene Matthews, 1/4 leather GBW 100th Anniversary, and Roberta Lavadour, miniature springback.